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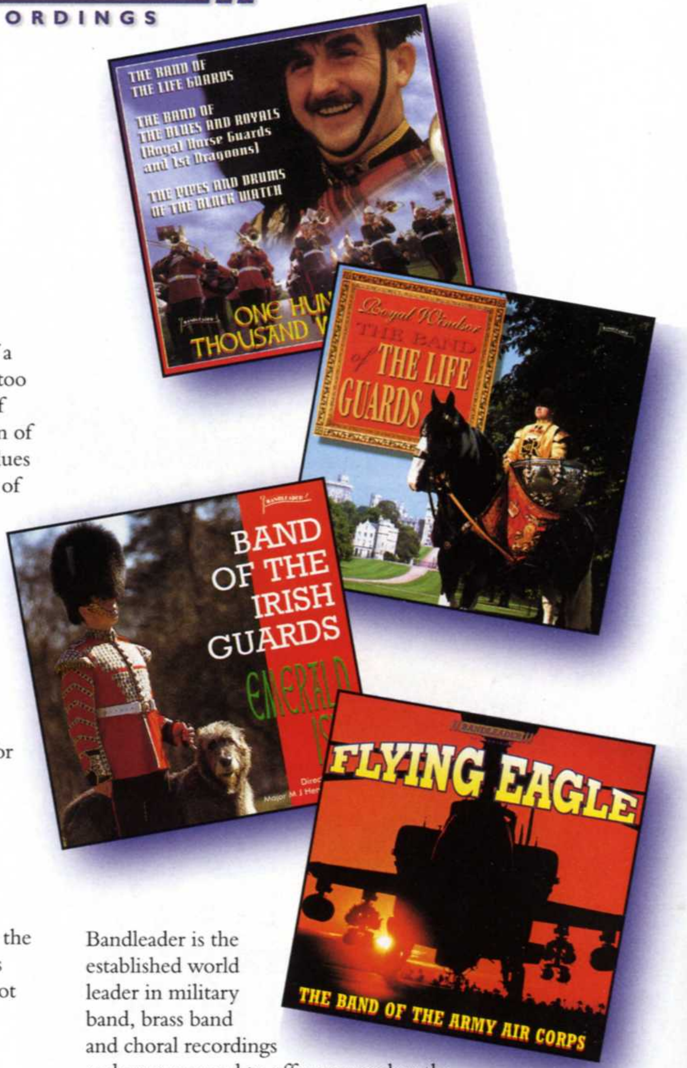
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PO Box 6017
Leighton Buzzard LU7 7FA
Tel/fax: 01525 370389
Email: MilModMag@Compuserve.com

Editorial Administrator
Jenny Etheridge
Tel: 01322 660070 Fax: 01322 667633

Contributing Editors
R.J. Marrion Stuart Asquith

PRODUCTION

Designer
Richard Dyer

Copy Control Manager
Louise Jones

Printed by
St. Ives plc

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Derek Croxson Ltd.

SALES

Advertising Sales
Colin Taylor
Tel: 01322 660070 Fax: 01322 667633
Northern Area Manager
Denise Barrow,
Thornley House,
Carrington Business Park, Urmston,
Manchester M31 4DD
Tel: 0161-776 4460 Fax: 0161-777 6524

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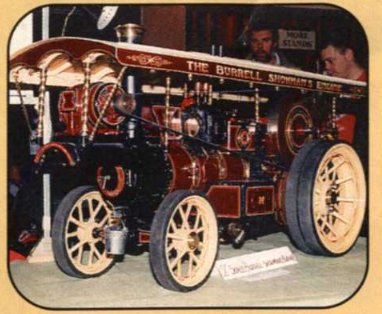
New products reviewed.

ABOVE: What's the best 1:35 scale T-34/85 tank kit on the market? See what Bruce Crosby thinks beginning on page 29.

RIGHT: Pegaso's kit of Napoleon is based on the famous painting by David. Steve Kirtley paints the model beginning on page 43.

COVER: Rob Henden gives Warrior's Fallschirmjäger Ardennes his airbrush treatment. See how he went about it in the feature beginning on page 14. Inset is Britain's Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank serving with the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. Feature begins on page 18.



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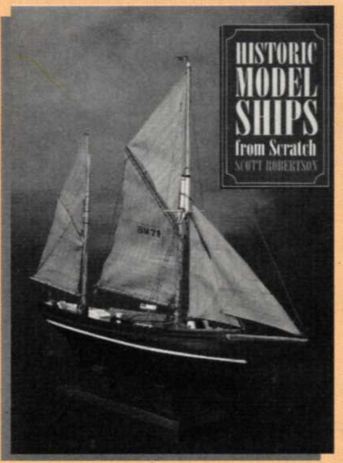

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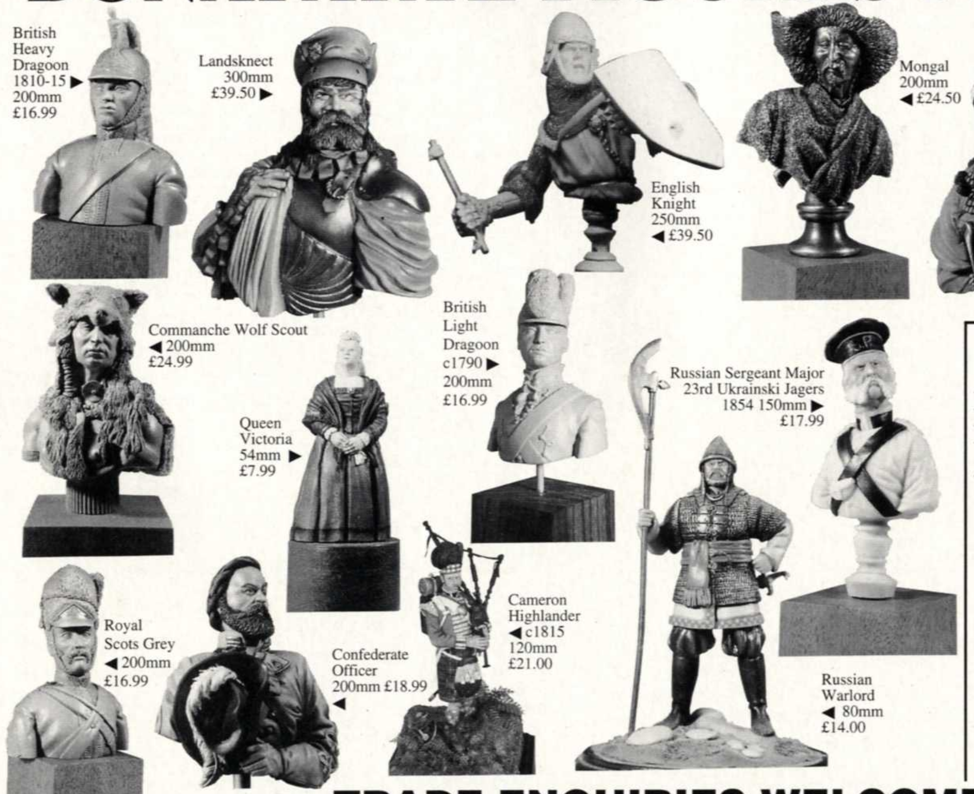
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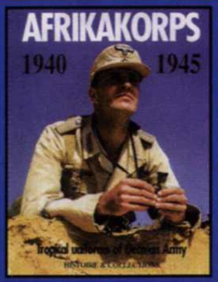
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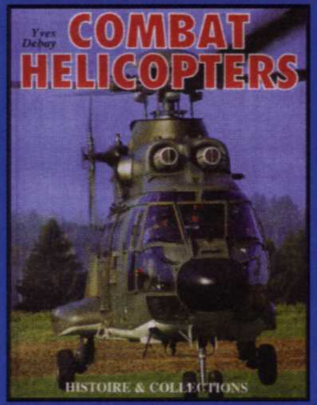
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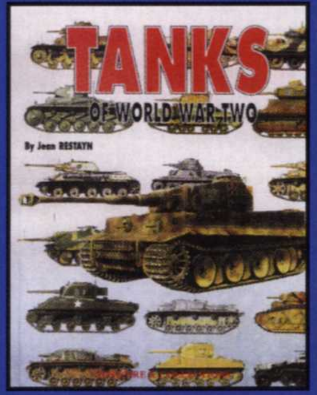
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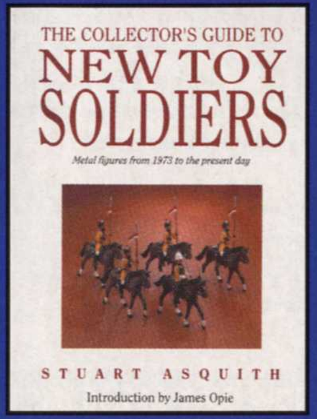
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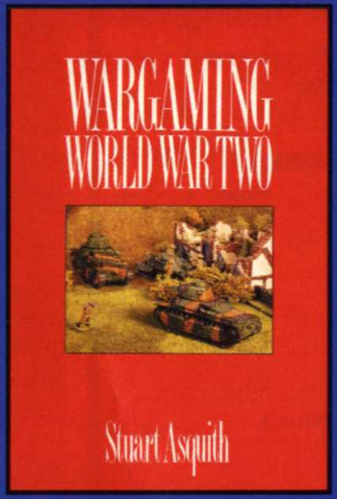
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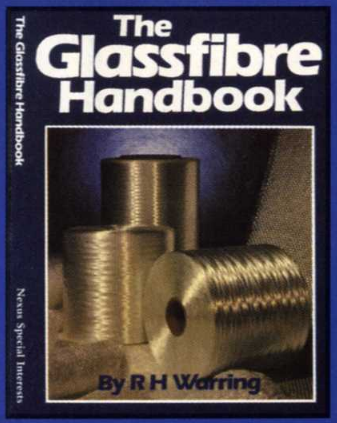
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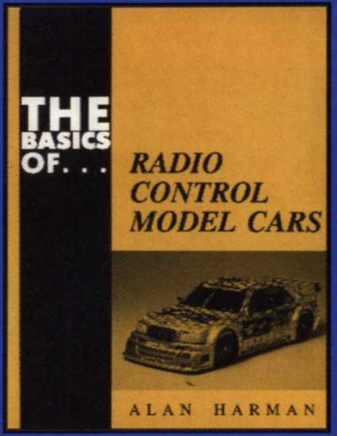
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INFORMATION / DIARY DATES

British Model Soldier Society

99

Annual Show

The British Model Soldier Society's 1999 Annual Show will once again be held at the popular venue of the New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, Holborn, London on Saturday 24th April, 1999 from 10.30pm until 5pm.

Model displays, demonstrations, competitions and trade stands will be the order of the day along with some planned additional and original features to be announced. all styles, periods, scales and types of model soldier will feature at the show. BMSS branches and Special Interest Groups plus fellow societies will have displays.

The BMSS Annual Show incorporates the Society's Annual Model Competitions with classes for BMSS members and also an open competition in which all modellers are welcome to enter.

Further details of the displays, special events and stands will be announced as soon as they are confirmed.

To book a stand at the Show or for further information write to BMSS Support Services, 145 South Park Drive, Ilford, Essex IG3 9AD. Tel: 0181 590 7812.

The Napoleonic Fair

Next year's Napoleonic Fair will be held on Sunday 21st February at the Royal National Hotel in London. The opening hours for the fair have been extended, opening earlier at 9.30am and closing at 4.30pm.

Please note: the organisers have decided to drop the modelling competition from next year's Show.

Further information on The Napoleonic Fair is available from the organisers, Greenhill Books, Park House, 1 Russell Gardens, London NW11 9NN. Tel: 0181-458 6314.

North Surrey MMC

Where are all those modellers in Surrey and South-West London? If you are looking to join an established military modelling club then look no further. The North Surrey Military Modelling Club still meets on the third Monday of each month at the Church Halls, New Road, Hackbridge, Surrey between 7.30pm and 9.30pm.

Each meeting is an informal gathering of like-minded modellers with optional monthly competitions and frequent demonstrations (volunteers required!).

The club is also keen to track down two former members, Lee Greenwood and Ken Wickens.

For further information contact one of the two following people:

Kevin Jarratt, 0181 393 8534 (Club Secretary) or Keith Goldsworthy 0181 873 2786 (Chairman).

Or visit our website: http://www.nsmmc.mcmail.com/
or email the club: nsmmc@mcmail.com

Some copy for 'Notice Board' is still being sent to our Hemel Hempstead office, which is now closed, and the mail redirection service from there to our head office at Swanley will not be maintained for much longer. Vital notices are being delayed and any important announcements could miss the issue which has been requested.

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'Parade Ground 98'

Stockton Sports Centre off Norton Road, Stockton-on-Tees is the venue for 'Parade Ground 98' on Saturday 21st November, organised by Thomas Davidson and David R. Clemmet. The doors open at 10am and close at 3.30pm. Admission is £1.50 adults; senior citizens and children 50p. Car parking is free and refreshments - hot and cold snacks - will be available. The proceeds from 'Parade Ground', as always, will be donated to a Cleveland Disabled Persons Charity. Over the past 17 years of its run, 'Parade Ground' has raised almost £8,000 for regional charities.

The Show presents modelling and wargames with re-enactment and living history displays and there will be a good trade presence with 35 stands. Around 15 wargames will be presented by North East clubs and individuals in addition to the DBA Wargames Competition. Modelling demonstrations and participation wargames will allow visitors to get closer to the varied interests on display whereas a Bring and Buy stall is a good way to turn your unwanted modelling requirements into cash - and, perhaps buy something else in return! The unique Tombola with modelling and wargaming prizes will be held once again.

The military modelling competition has 14 classes and will be staged by a North East club, offering prize certificates for first, second and third in each class. There is a registration fee of 20p plus 10p per entry, with no limit on the number of entries from one person. All entries are to be registered by 1.30pm for judging which will commence at 2pm. The classes are:

1. Armoured and soft-skinned vehicles below 1:35 scale.
2. Armoured and soft-skinned vehicles 1:35 scale and above.
3. Aircraft up to and including 1:72 scale.
4. Aircraft above 1:72 scale.
5. Foot and mounted figures up to and including 75mm.
6. Foot and mounted figures above 75mm.
7. Figure Busts any scale.
8. Vignettes any scale.
9. Dioramas any scale.
10. Wargames figures any scale.
11. Wargames armies any scale.
12. Sci-Fi Figures any scale.
13. Sci-Fi Vehicles any scale.
14. Civilian Vehicles any scale.

For further information on the Show contact the Co-organisers David R. Clemmet and Thomas Davidson, 3 Hemel Close, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees TS17 9AP. Tel: 01642 885406. Fax: 01642 881625. E-mail: DClemmet@aol.com

Trent Modellers

The Trent Modelling Association (East Midlands British Model Soldier Society) meet on one Friday evening in every month at Long Eaton United Reformed Church (near Asda super store) from 7pm until 9pm. Dates of the remaining meetings for this year are 9th October, 20th November and 4th December. Further information from Mr G. Holmes, 7 Arran Close, Stapleford, Notts NG9 8LT.

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NEXT ISSUE

Volume 28 No. 16 will be published 30th October 1998

Military Modelling is now published every four weeks and throughout this year there will be an extra SIX Special Issues of your favourite magazine to look out for. Keep an eye on this 'NEXT ISSUE' panel in each magazine for the publication date of the next one in line.
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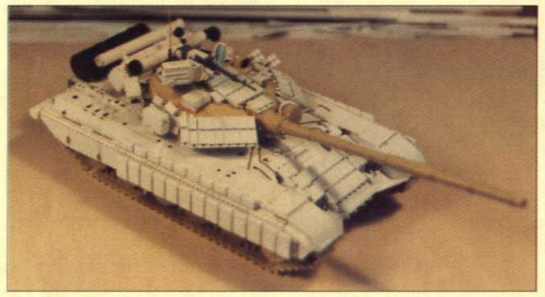

- **YANKS RANGER**
  Painting the new bust from YANKS Miniatures.
- **MAFVA NATIONALS**. Closer to home - the best models on show at the Miniature Fighting Vehicle Association's annual competitions.
- **PLUS...** The best figure and vehicle modelling features - just as you like 'em! No, that T-64 isn't the Skif kit - it's Cookie Sewell's scratch built BV variant - the Skif kit comes later! Below is Adrian Hopwood's large scale Roman Legionary bust

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DESPATCH

The Editor welcomes readers' letters for publication which must always be accompanied by the writer's full name and address. The address will be published in full if the letter is interpreted as a request for information to the readership. Otherwise only the writer's full name will be published.
Letters are not, under any circumstances, altered or severely edited; however, they may be shortened because of space limitations.
Letters to the Editor intended for publication should be addressed to "Despatch", Military Modelling, PO Box 6017, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, LU7 7FA.
The Editor is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed in published readers' correspondence.

READERS' LETTERS

Jordanian markings

Dear Sir,
Here are some patriotic slogans for tanks, etc., used by the Jordanian army during 1967 and 1973.

Unfortunately, Steve Zaloga made a slight mistake with the slogans on his otherwise perfect Jordanian M-48 Patton tank in Vol. 28 No.10.
Moustafa Assad
Lebanon

Palestine –	فلسطين
King Hussein –	الملك حسين
Jordan –	الاردن
Qadisiya (a famous ancient battle) –	القادسية
Victory –	النصر
Liberation army –	جيش التحرير
Jerusalem –	القدس
Al-Karak (Jordanian city) –	الكرك
Bedouain Guards (Jordanian elite) –	حرس البادية

Aussie acrylics

Dear Sir,
I read with interest your review in "Atten-shun!" (Vol.28 Issue 1) of a brand of acrylic paint called 'Inscribe'.

Australian modellers with their interests inspired by your review may wish to know that a product which is obviously identical is available at various branches of "Clint's Crazy Prices" at $2 per 2 fluid ounce (59ml) container.

The names of some of the colours that you quoted are the same and the only difference in the catalogue numbers is that the ones applied to the products available in this country have the suffix 03 added, so that 1703 Porcelain Flesh, for example, becomes 170303. Clint's don't stock a large range of colours, but in the Art and Craft departments of multiple stores such as 'Lincraft', 'Spotlight' and even 'Hardware House' a larger range closer I think to the 45 colours mentioned in your review is stocked at a larger price (!) of $3.25 or more per container.

I have been using them for about two years now. You mentioned Almond, Porcelain Flesh, Seashell Pink and Peach Blush for a flesh painting palette. Mine would be 1706 Coral Rose, 1707 English Rose, 1705 Peach Blush and Porcelain Flesh, plus Jo Sonja's Gold Oxide and Warm White; and a must - Jo Sonja's Retarder and for some Flow Medium, also from Jo Sonja's.

A beautiful deepened, almost crimson 171003 'Hollyberry' *must* be tried and the 170103 'Snow' is the best acrylic white I have used!

In a completely different vein, and on behalf of my modelling group, comments are due regarding the 'Yellow Dragoon' which readers are encouraged to model and which respected modeller and real artist Phil Kessling features in his article. He describes how he decides to research alternatives to the standard green dragoon uniform with coloured facings and comes up with a trumpeter of the 23rd Regiment. Fair enough, but, and I quote, "A large number of French dragoons served in Spain ... depict the figure in brown pants made from locally acquired Spanish Cloth". All the information I can lay my hands on says that although other 'yellow' dragoons served in Spain the 23rd did not.

To a man our modelling group agrees that Phil's dragoon, wherever he is, couldn't possibly support his bearskin cap with his right arm in that position.

It was great to see a beautiful job of painting and surprising indeed to find a highly respected modeller is human after all.
Michael Montague
Australia

Tiger Stripes

Dear Sir,
Having enjoyed your magazine for years and having a subscription I was wondering if it would be possible to have and article regarding the painting of 'Tiger Stripe' as worn in Vietnam by LRRPs. If you have covered this I must have missed that article.
Wayne Thompson

Tartan terror

Dear Sir,
Painting tartan on my models terrifies me. I can't get it right - or it doesn't seem to be right to me when I've finished.

Could you give us an article or articles on not only painting tartans, but something about the material itself (military ones) so I may understand the subject better.
Glynn McNaughton
Keep a look out for future issues for features on 'Tiger Stripes' and Tartans. Ed.

Baron Neville of Raby

Dear Sir
I wish to correct the letter from Calvin W. Hurd USAF (ret.) on page 13, in 'Despatch' Vol.28 Issue 11.

The DNB is incorrect. The first Baron Neville of Raby was surnamed 'The Indolent'; he died in 1331. He had two sons, Robert the Peacock of the North and Ralph, the second son.

Robert was killed by James the Earl of Douglas in Berwick Park. His brother Ralph was taken prisoner and held by Patrick the Earl of Dunbar. This Ralph fought at the Battle of Neville's Cross 1346. On his death in 1367 he was the first layman to be buried in Durham Cathedral.

Sic Transit Gloria Mundi
Dennis Newsome

Wrong number of stars

Dear Sir,
I wrote that the Stuart Tank at Kasserine Pass article in *MM* several issues back had too many stars on the flag - 50 instead of 48! Silly me, I said it was to be 48 not 51 stars. I apologise for the error and hope other readers caught it too. That's what makes 'Despatch' interesting ...others send in corrections that inform and also amuse!

Why so much detail on every armoured vehicle article you publish? It's more than a modeller ever wants to know! Why so deep in detail; inside a tank motor, or dashboard serial numbers? It's so boring most of the time. It seems like one is trying to sell an army a line of vehicle to the procurement offices!

Readers, am I wrong? Do we need so much info? Do we have to know the fabric of some army's uniform in 1750, or 1914? Please let the editors know so we can get more readable articles.
Eugene Steinberg
USA

Centurion slip

Dear Sir,
I am writing to you with reference to the article in this month's (Vol.28 No.13) ***Mil Mod*** about the Andrea Centurion bust.
All I can say is "wow!" I must have one!

There is one small problem being that I am an armour modeller and generally not one for painting figures, there is a question I must ask.

In the text Fidel Rinçon describes how he used fine wire wool to gently polish the surface of the helmet and cheek pieces, but on the very first page of the article there is a picture of the completed model primed and assembled. So how was he able to polish the metal parts?

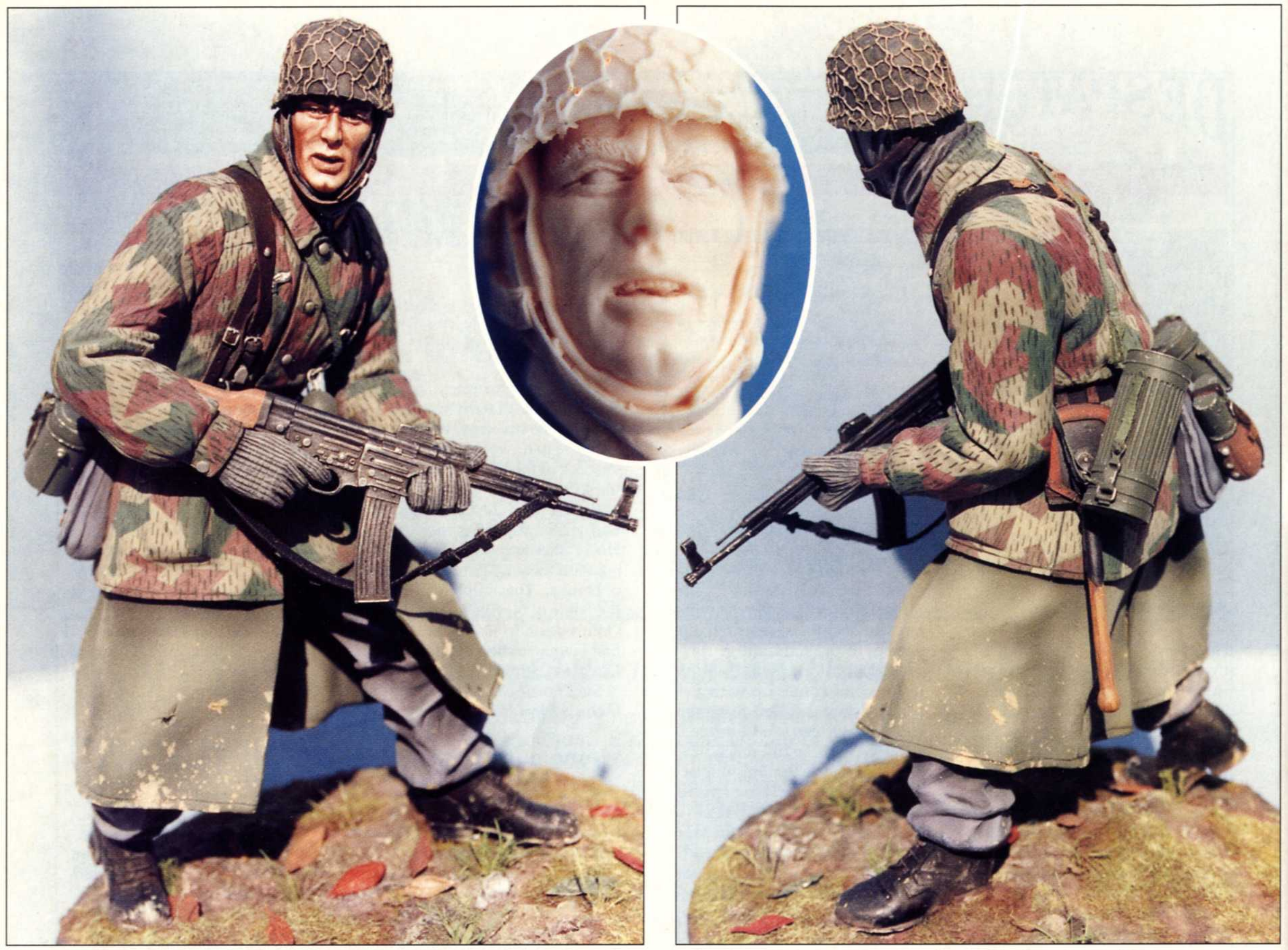
As I said, I'm only an armour modeller so could someone please explain to me about the little bit of construction I am missing because this is one bust that I would (or will) gladly part with my money to have a go at.
M.D. Ireson
Well spotted Mr Ireson. The simple explanation is that it's another model which was undercoated to show the assembled kit. It is my fault, I did not make the caption clear and apologise if it caused any confusion to readers. The picture at the top of page 16 shows the white metal parts in the kit after the appropriate treatment. Ed.

'CRIES FOR HELP'

- Can anyone please identify for me the nation and regiment of a small batch of 60mm attention plastics (overall height 70mm) I acquired? White blouse, belt and trousers; red cravat; red/yellow aiguilettes; Wolseley type helmet with red/white plumes; black shoes; sword held close to body.
  Bill Ewbank, Box 1314, Taylor University, Upland, Indiana 46989, USA.

- I am trying to find out if an organisation called 'The International Military Miniatures Federation' originally set up in 1973 by a Mr Ronald Buxton is still active? If any reader is a member of the Federation or knows how I could contact it please write to me.
  V. Bleaken, 18 South Street, Popakwa, Auckland 1703, New Zealand.

- Can anyone out there help me? I am a figure painter and I have been a reader of Military Modelling since the first issue. I am trying to obtain the 120mm Kirin figure of an 11th Dragoon, 1914 which I believe was designed by Derek Hansen.
  LSA Models are trying to get the model for me, but can any reader or model stockist tell me where I could obtain this figure from?
  N. Green, 553 Brunshaw Road, Burnley, Lancs BB10 4HP



INSET: *Close up of the head shows that a good base is offered for painting by the author's methods - virtually straight from the mould.*

Fallschirmjäger Ardennes

Rob Henden paints Warriors' big 1:9 scale German paratrooper figure

As a fan of Warrior Scale Models large-scale German figures, I was very pleased recently when I finally tracked down their 1:9 scale *Fallschirmjäger* kit sculpted by John Rosengrant. Although not 'limited edition' kits, some of these desirable American-produced resin kits seem to come and go very quickly. Is this a reflection of their popularity, or their rarity? Who knows? Anyway, I finally obtained one and relished the task of assembling and painting it.

The kit is cast in a pale yellow resin, which has become such a familiar sight, and each of the parts cast onto small blocks of resin which required removal with the faithful razor saw.

The main torso and legs' parts are an integral moulding which makes it both impressive in size and detail, with all the buckles and fittings on the webbing accurately represented. Both arms are moulded with the two halves of the MP 44 assault rifle in situ; the left hand has the stock and main body of the weapon, and the right hand holds the barrel and gas piston assembly. When two arm assemblies are united to complete a weapon (as a butt join) disaster can often result in a banana shaped article. This, however, was not the case with this figure, although careful removal of excess resin from the left hand is crucial; this plug is cast into the palm of the hand from the end of the MP 44's barrel. (See pictures).

Several dry runs were required on my kit, but the resulting fit of parts was very near perfect, in part due to the accurate fit of the arms into well-defined keys in the shoulders.

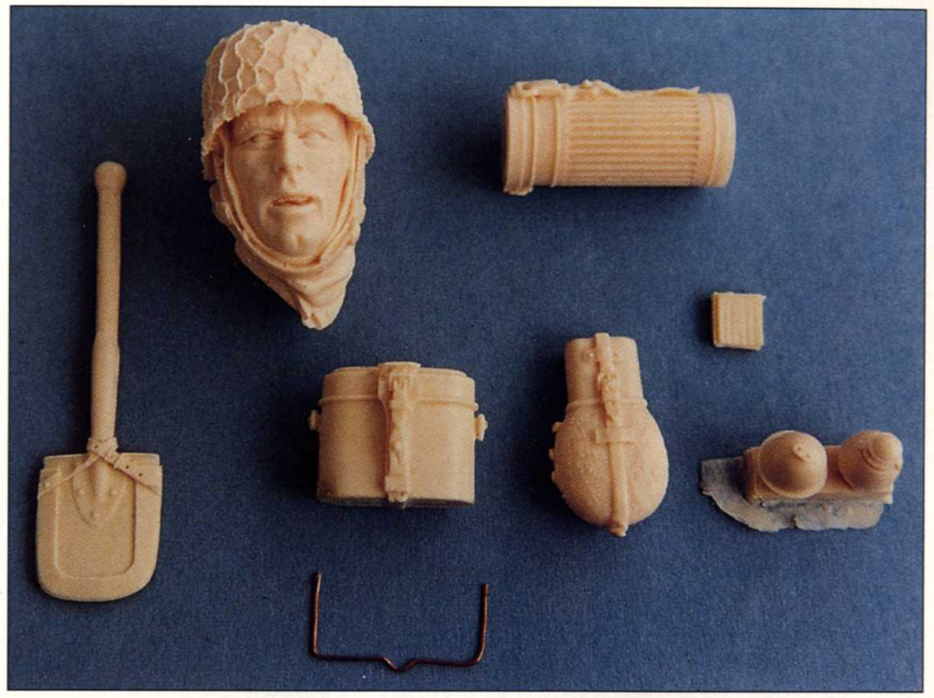
The head is nicely sculpted with John Rosengrant's usual 'photo-realistic' style which makes his figures some of the most lifelike I have seen. The eyes are treated realistically with rounded eyeballs and individually moulded teeth add to the fun when painting.

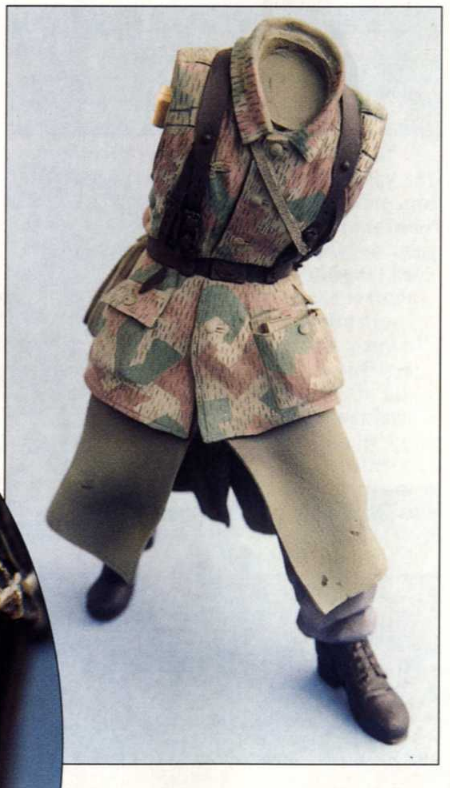
The head is 'crowned' by the typical German paratrooper's helmet with complete leather chin strap and the netting is particularly well done and is very convincing, giving the impression of being a separate piece. some minor flaws needed to be removed from the Balaclava type helmet *(toque)* where it joins the chin straps, and these were removed with a scalpel as part of the routine preparation work before painting.

There is no chance of placing the head in this kit in the wrong position due to the way it is cast. It is a perfect fit, unlike some kits where the position can be a bit ambiguous giving room for error, and thus assuring a correct pose.

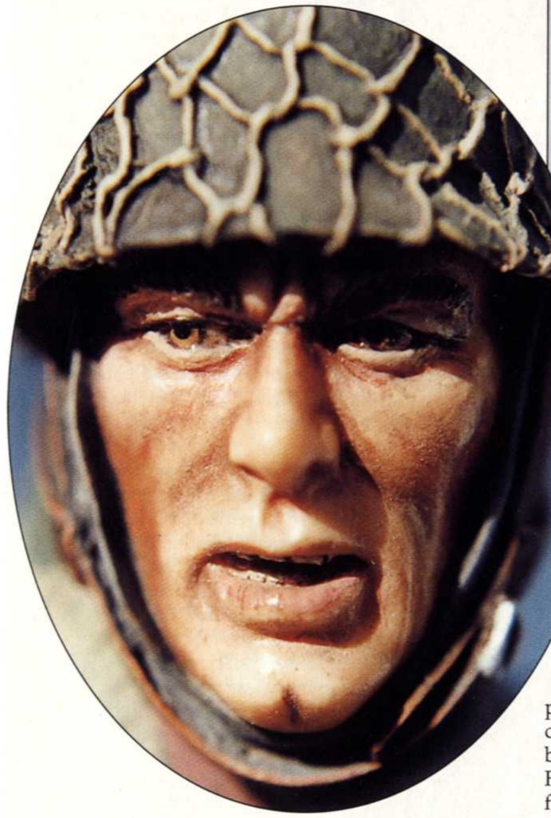
Equipment

As previously mentioned the figure carries an MP 44 (*Maschinenpistole* 44 - later became StG 44 *Sturmgewehr 44*) which is well cast and it only requires a sling if you wish to fit one. Other typical pieces of infantry equipment supplied are a felt-covered water bottle with cup, an entrenching tool, a gas mask case, an egg-shaped grenade and the typical 'mess tin' or food container with lid. The latter requires a metal handle which can be made up from a piece of wire. In a previous Warriors' kit a small resin former was supplied to bend up a handle, but I've misplaced it and made one consulting suitable references.





ABOVE: Some of the kit parts which are cast in a light neutral colour polyurethane resin which makes a good base colour for painting convincing flesh tones. See the text for details.
LEFT: The body, less arms and head, being painted. Darker shades of paint to mark seams, outline pockets, visible here.



ABOVE: Close up of the face shows how the flesh tones are obtained by airbrushing over the natural pale yellow resin as a base colour, rather than undercoating.

The boots are convincingly moulded with laces and lace eyelets clearly defined. Once the soles of the boots were cleaned up they were pinned with piano wire and glued with cyanoacrylate adhesive into the legs.

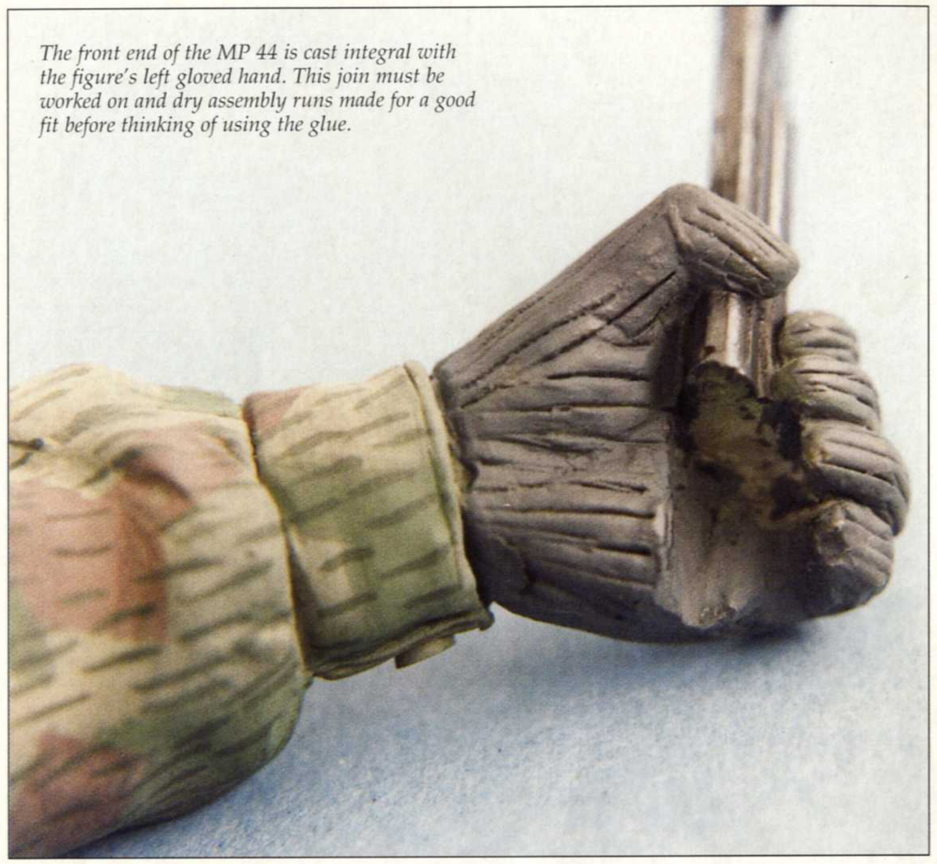
Painting

The fallschirmjäger is dressed in a smock, printed in a variation on the splinter pattern camouflage, which is worn over a greatcoat. I begun by airbrushing the whole figure with a Field Grey-khaki mixture which was mixed from Humbrol enamels. I fist mixed black yellow and white to create khaki, then I added a small amount of red to duplicate a faded Field Grey colour whilst referring to colour prints in Histoire & Collections publications showing German uniforms. There are more than a few variations of the 'splinter' camouflage in the books and some versions of the background colour vary; some are a Reed Green whereas others are more like a Field Grey shade. I stuck with the 'average' colour which looked like the one on the Warriors' kit box top picture.

It is important (to me) to paint the greatcoat a different colour than the base colour of the smock and so I elected to use Tamiya XF 60 Field Grey. The upper body was masked and the greatcoat sprayed then shaded with the airbrush using XF 60 with black added and cellulose thinners (approx. 60% thinners and 40% paint). Always wear a good quality face mask while using the airbrush to protect your air ways from breathing in the atomised cellulose and paint mix and the fumes from it.

The trousers were airbrushed freehand, without masking, in a *Luftwaffe* blue-grey, mixed as for the Adolf Galland bust (Vol. 28 Issue 11) using French WWI Blue, black and white. The reason I didn't mask this colour from the inside of the greatcoat was because the tonal value of the blue grey was about the same as the Field Grey and once black was added to it the natural shading sprayed on disguised any join between the two colours. I used a Badger 150 airbrush at very 'close quarters', at a relatively high pressure of 28 psi and, with the finest nozzle fitted, it produced quite a sharp demarcation line.

Returning to the smock, the pattern used is basically a random pattern of irregular angular shapes in red brown and dark green, with a 'rain' pattern over the top of this. The red brown was mixed from Red 60, Black 33 and White 34, again referring to colour pictures in the Histoire & Collections books, taking into account the ageing and fading of the colours, not to give a freshly printed look.



The front end of the MP 44 is cast integral with the figure's left gloved hand. This join must be worked on and dry assembly runs made for a good fit before thinking of using the glue.

The green, mixed from Humbrol Mid Green 101, Black 33 and Yellow 24 was applied next, following the theme of the red brown. Once a pleasing balance was achieved it was time to do the most tedious part of the camouflage - painting the hundreds of small dark green lines which look like a graphic representation of rain. The key to correctly painting most difficult camouflage schemes is to study original, genuine items or pictures of them and to avoid slavishly copying them line for line, but to paint what gives a fair balance of the colours. Some of the fabric prints have characteristic dots, lines or shapes and as long as these are represented to give a taste of the style, then I generally find the camouflage looks convincing. For example, if you examine the 'splinter' prints there are areas where no 'rain' lines are printed, but these are not immediately apparent. However, if this minor detail is omitted it doesn't give a true representation of the print as a whole.

When I'd completed the camouflage I mixed black and red to paint dark brown borders around the various features of the smock, clearly defining details such as pockets, shoulder seams, jacket front fly and the top of the pocket containing the spare MP 44 magazine. Extra dark brown was mixed to paint the leather webbing which was lightly buffed to give a more realistic texture and was then weathered with a lighter brown.

Careful painting of the MP 44 was required due to it being moulded into the hands. I painted the weapon in Humbrol 'Metal Cote' Gunmetal and lightly dry-brushed in printers' silver ink to represent wear. The grey woollen gloves were next painted without fear of contaminating the metallic paint particles. A sling was added to the MP 44 using real leather as described in my Warriors *Panzerknacker* article (in the last issue) with buckles, etc., added from wire. The 'bread bag' or haversack, which is moulded onto the main body casting, was painted in *Luftwaffe* blue-grey (as used for the trousers) and highlighted using white added to the base colour. The seams were then bordered with black added to the base colour.

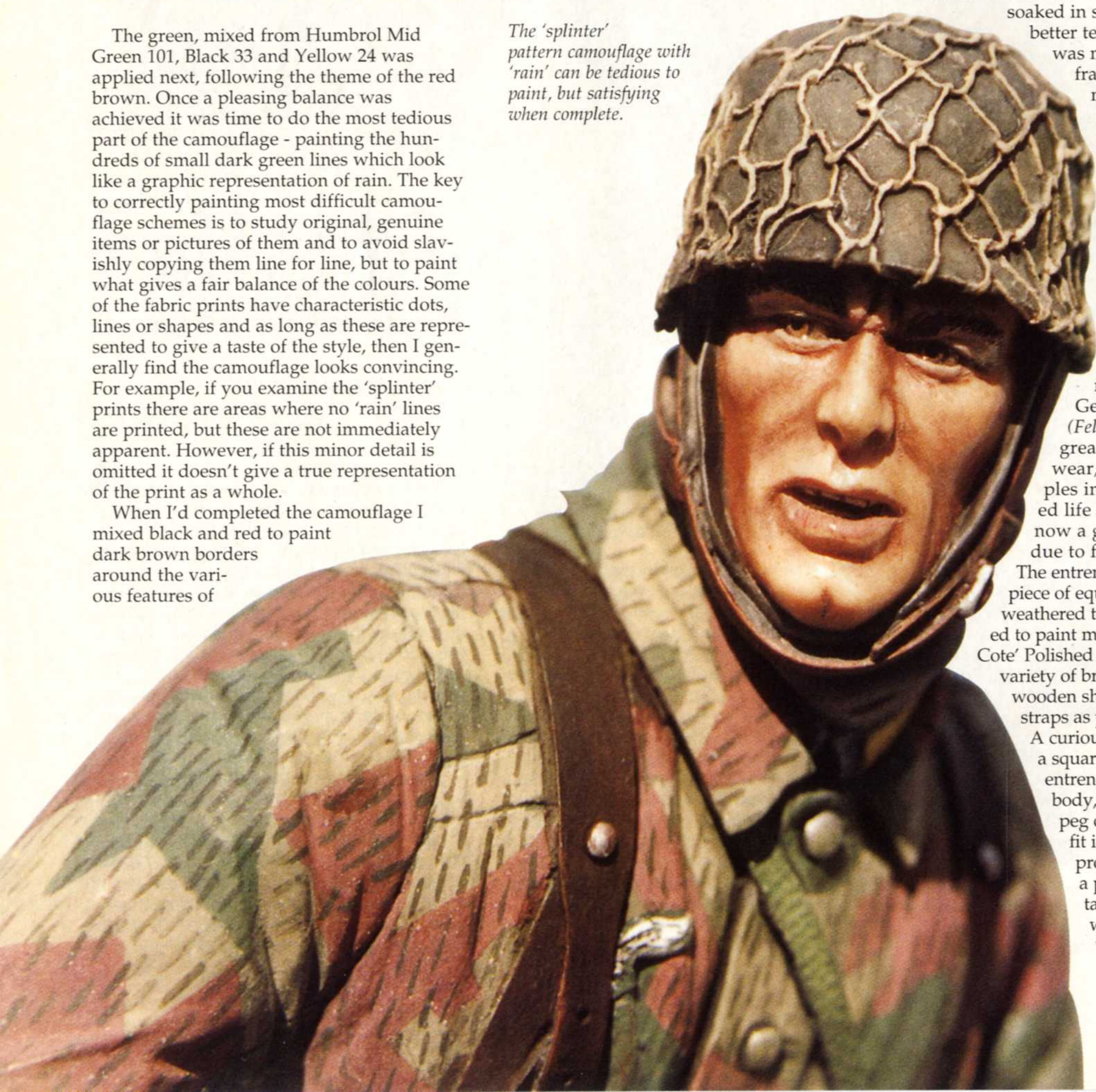
The gas mask case and food canteen were airbrushed Tamiya XF60 acrylic with a little Tamiya clear added to give a satin finish. Both of these items were metal (the canteen aluminium and the gas mask case steel and tin plate) and soon became chipped and scratched in use. I depicted this with fine lines and 'shapes' of silver with light grey added, mainly on the extremities and exposed areas.

The strap on the gas mask case presented a problem due to the absence of a section of strap between the figure and the case. This was fabricated from a piece of suitable cloth soaked in super glue which gave a better texture to paint on and was more easily cut without fraying. This strap was now painted in a suitable green and highlighted by dry-brushing in a lighter shade.

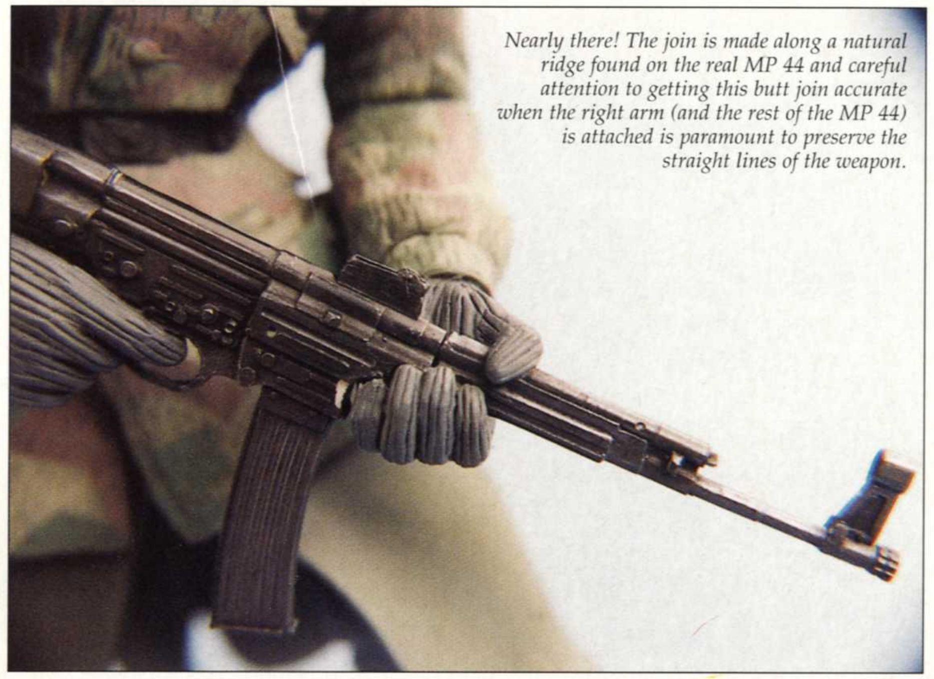
The felt covering on the water bottle was painted a mid brown mixed from red, yellow and black. When fully dry this was dry-brushed with a lighter mixture of the same basic brown, but with less black added and more yellow plus white. German water bottles *(Feldflaschen)* can vary a great deal with age, and wear, and I have seen examples in museums which started life brown and which are now a greyish brown shade due to fading.

The entrenching tool is another piece of equipment which can be weathered to extremes - but I decided to paint my with Humbrol 'Metal Cote' Polished Steel for the blade, with a variety of brown shades for the wooden shaft and dark brown straps as per the webbing.

A curious detail on the figure was a square recess where the entrenching tool fits onto the body, but no corresponding peg on the entrenching tool to fit into it(?) This wasn't a problem, however, because a pair of moulded leather tabs are present on the waist belt which the 'spade' part butts onto.



The 'splinter' pattern camouflage with 'rain' can be tedious to paint, but satisfying when complete.



Nearly there! The join is made along a natural ridge found on the real MP 44 and careful attention to getting this butt join accurate when the right arm (and the rest of the MP 44) is attached is paramount to preserve the straight lines of the weapon.

Facial flesh tones

I first airbrushed the skin tones on the face using the same method I described in the last issue. To recap, I used the resin colour as a base instead of using a primer and pre-shaded the face using a mixture of Fluorescent Orange, yellow, white and a touch of black. Where the shadows of the nose, eyelids and forehead fell, and where the face meets the head gear I airbrushed darker flesh tones.

Working in this large scale I airbrush most of the larger areas, but to emphasise the details I always employ the paint brush to a varying degree and this particular face required shading in some very subtle ways, using glazes. I painted lines of dark flesh tones to emphasise the nostrils and used pure white spirit to 'tease' out the colour.

Paint was carefully cleaned off the eyeballs using a OO brush and neat spirit. I have found this a good way of providing a white for the eye without building up too much paint and I also find it easier to paint the pupils onto the resin, rather than onto an undercoat. Please note that some resins are 'too yellow' and not at all suitable for this method of painting the eyes. The fleshy parts of the eyelids which border the eye were added and this can be mixed from red with a little white, which should be like the flesh mix, but a little more pink in tone.

When painting a figure it is important to determine which way you want the eyes to look because this not only will give the figure expression, but it will also, in some cases, convey any intended actions, etc. The fallschirmjäger seems to be 'creeping cautiously' and with this firmly in mind I decided to paint his eyes look to his. I also reached this decision after imitating the figure's pose by turning my own head right and looking in the opposite direction, which proved to be very awkward and uncomfortable.

I painted the irises in dark brown, then mixed a lighter brown and painted the inner ring of the iris leaving a fine line of the dark brown. The black pupil was added last, with a coat of Tamiya Clear to give the eyes a liquid appearance. The finishing touch to the eyes was the addition of dark brown eye-lashes with the upper ones being painted more prominently than the lower ones.

Lips were painted with a mix of the flesh tone with extra red and white added, then highlighted and shaded with various mixes of the base colour. To give depth to the mouth a dark flesh mix was painted into the opening and the teeth painted with white with a little yellow added, then highlighted with white.

To complete the head the Balaclava *(toque)* was painted dark grey and dry-brushed with a lighter shade of the same grey for the highlights. The helmet straps were painted dark brown with highlights of lighter brown, exactly how the leather equipment was painted. The distinctive German parachutists' helmet was painted in a dark field grey with the camouflage net carefully painted in a dark cream mixture which was made from yellow, black and red with a large amount of white added. Although this net could be dry-brushed I decided to paint it the conventional way due to a build up of net colour on the helmet itself.

Groundwork

Because this figure is 1:9 scale I decided to use a variety of surfaces and textures to make the base look more interesting. To begin I covered the base with Tetrion filler which was textured with an old toothbrush and a piece of sponge. While the Tetrion was still wet I liberally sprinkled sand over it.

When dry, the whole area was airbrushed in a dark brown mixed up from black and red which was then dry-brushed with varying mixtures of progressively lighter browns. Some areas were now covered with static grass and the odd tuft of sisal string grass. This was then airbrushed in a dark green mixed from Humbrol Mid Green 101 and black. When fully dried out the grassy areas were dry-brushed with a light green mixture of Mid Green 101 with yellow and white added until the grass appeared to have 'depth'.

To add even more detail I decided to add some leaves; these were cut randomly from lead foil sheet and then lines engraved with the pointed end of a paintbrush handle. The leaves were painted in a variety of autumn shades and scattered on the groundwork.

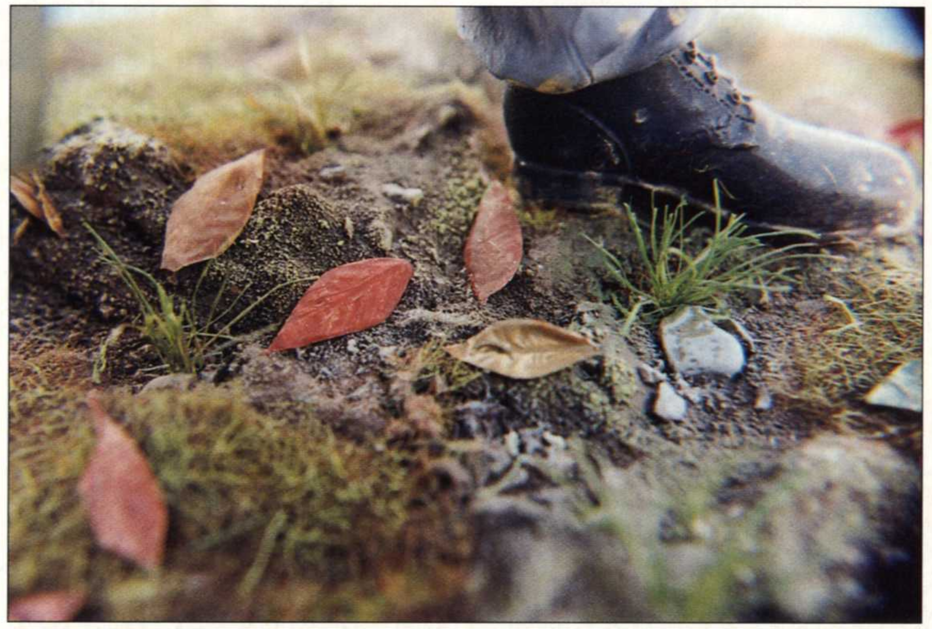
Conclusion

Every time I paint another German figure in 1:9 scale I treat it as a learning curve - when I was younger, like many others, I though German soldiers wore Field Grey uniforms ...'end of story!' By painting these figures I have become ore aware of the diversity of colours, camouflage patterns and designs of the actual garments. Even this figure taught me that *Luftwaffe* troops and paratroops had a different colour 'bread bag' to the army *(Wehrmacht)*.

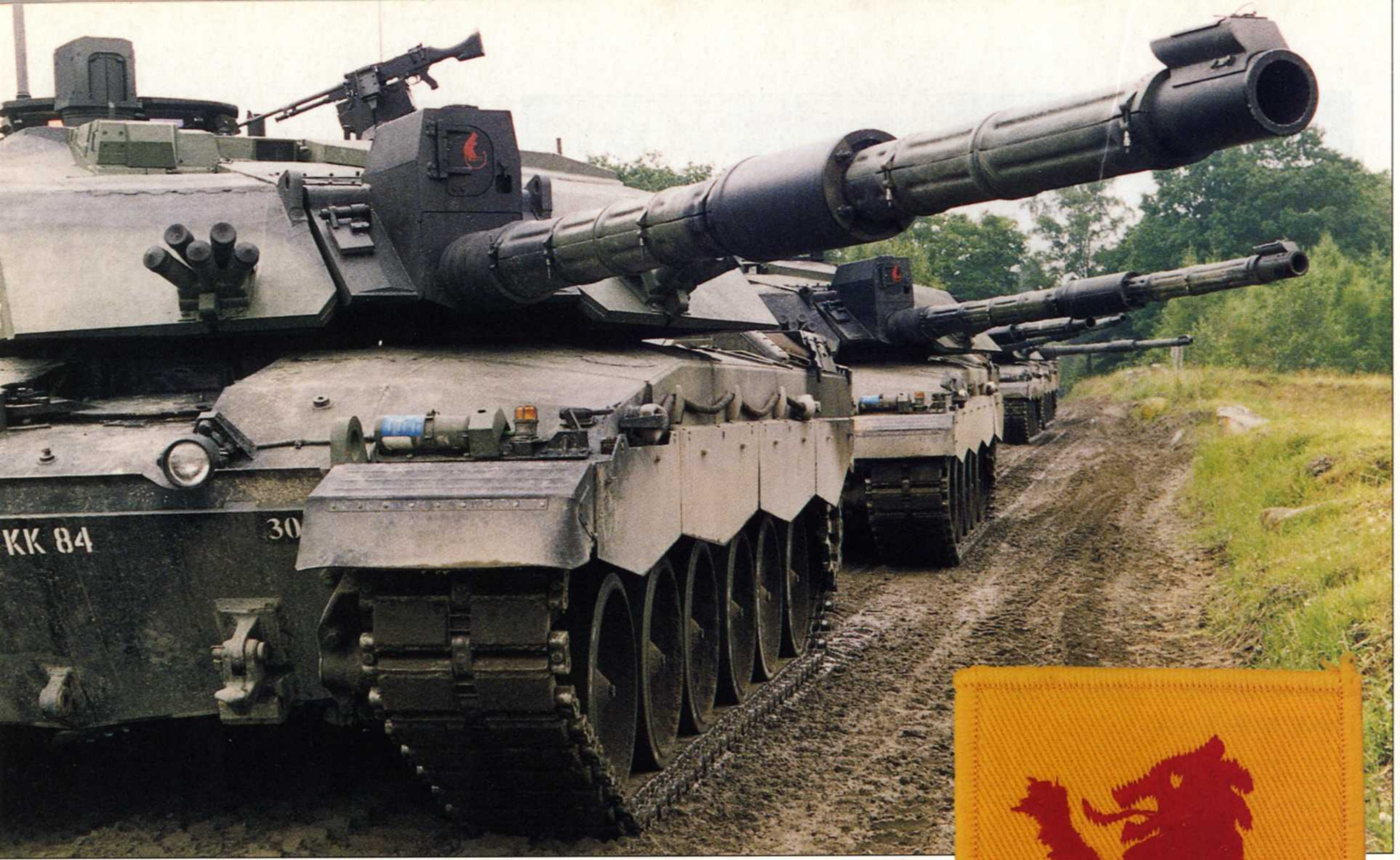
This figure was a joy to paint, I thoroughly recommend it and I can't find myself tiring of John Rosengrant's work.

Availability

The Warriors range is stocked by LSA Models 151 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3HD, who are sole distributors to the trade for the UK and Europe. ■

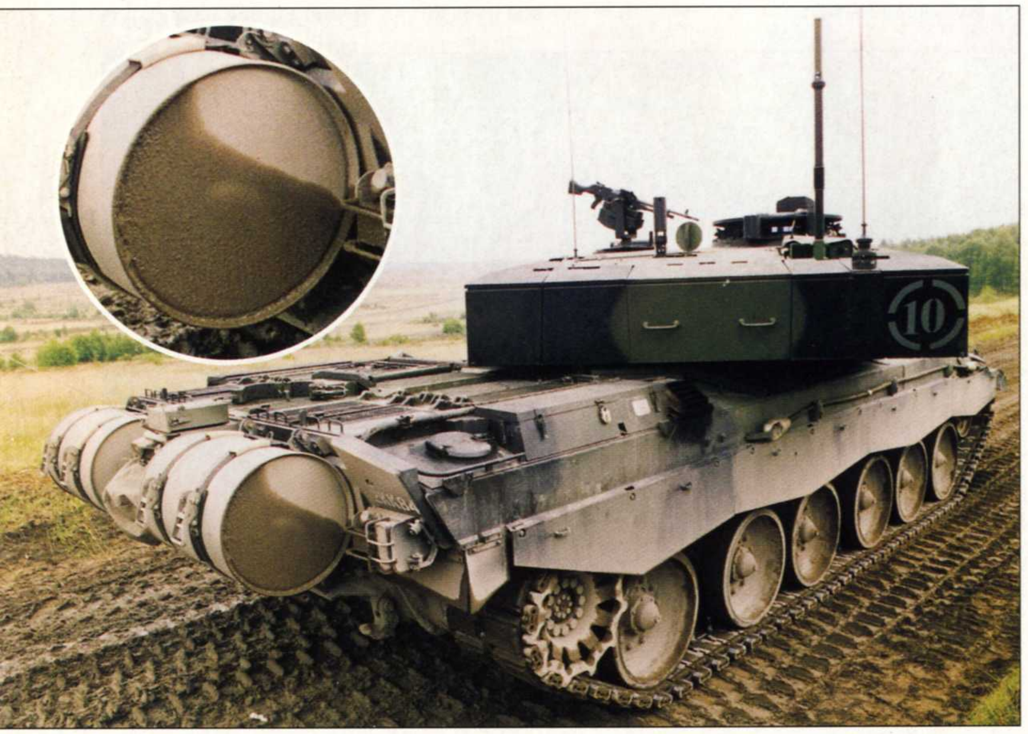


Groundwork with fallen leaves from lead foil with veins, etc., marked into the soft metal with a pointed paint brush handle.



Challenger 2

Andreas Kirchhoff photographed production models of Challenger 2 which are now in service with the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards - the first regiment to receive the new British MBT

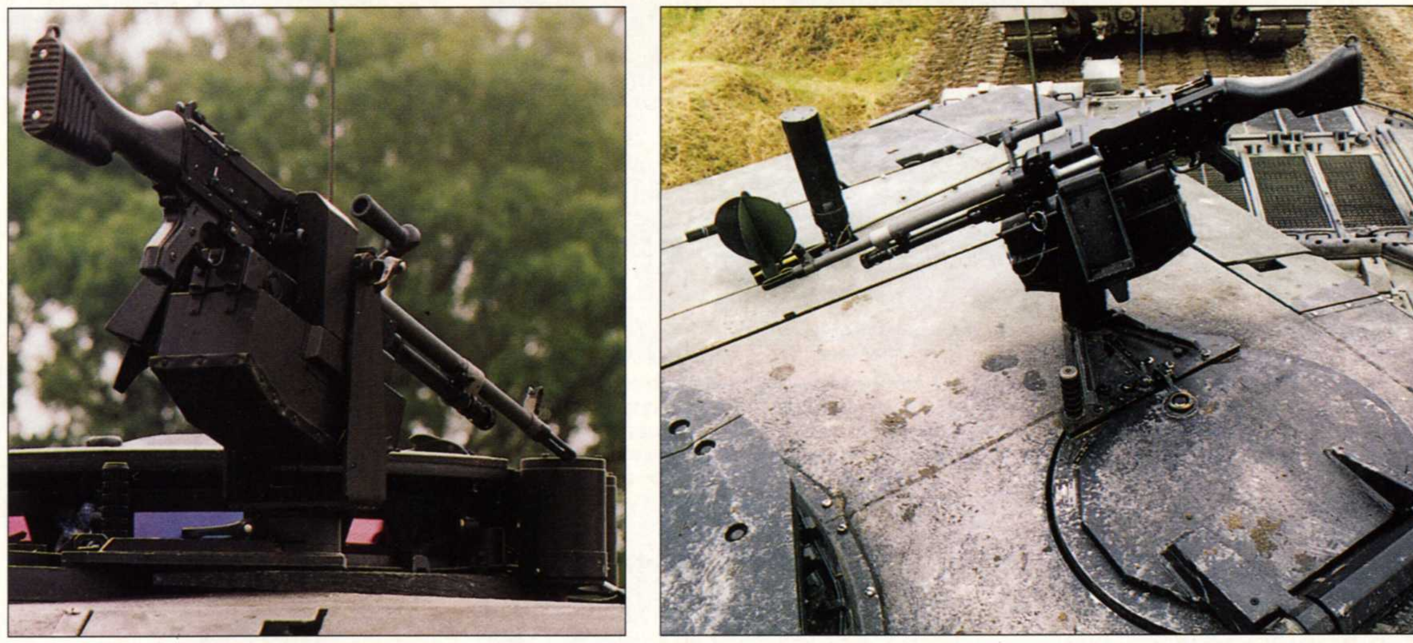


TOP: A row of five Challenger 2's with their turrets traversed to the left to show their powerful, 120mm L30 high-pressure rifled tank guns. A typical load of 50 rounds comprises a mix of APFSDS, HESH and smoke. Fully combustible charge cases are stowed in armoured bins below the turret ring. The close-up of the first vehicle's main gun clearly shows the muzzle reference system fitted to the muzzle end of the barrel, the new type thermal sleeve and the TOGS housing with a red Jerboa (7th Armoured Brigade) painted onto its hinged door.

ABOVE: Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Commanding Officer's tank crew (and his Land Rover driver) wear this distinctive and quite rare arm badge in peace and war. Photo: Gary Gibbs

LEFT: All of the rear including the fuel drums gets covered with light brown dirt and dust, which also builds up in the running gear. Interesting to note for modellers is the contrast between dry and wet dust in light brown and dark brown, visible on the fuel drum side, the sprocket ring and also on the rims of the road wheels. The turret rear shows the new crew stowage concept where for the first time in British tank design, stowage space is integrated into the turret shape.

ABOVE: Challenger 2 approaches the author at full speed. The Rolls Royce CV12 1200 hp twin turbo-charged engine gives the vehicle a top speed of 59 kp/h on roads and about 40 kp/h cross country. With its fuel capacity of 1,727 litres of diesel fuel, the vehicle has a range of 450km on roads and 250km cross country. Two external fuel drums of 200 litres each increase the range by a further 70 kilometres. The engine is the same as mounted on Challenger 1, but Challenger 2 has a new gearbox, the David Brown TN54 transmission, featuring six forward and two reverse gears. This type of gearbox was first fitted to Challenger CRARRV vehicles. The suspension also is improved and now is a second generation hydrogas system. BELOW: Close-up of the 7.62mm GPMG mounted in front of the gunner's hatch. The mount is different from the more complicated design on the pre-production models photographed by Ken Jones two years ago, the GPMG is now mounted on a simple pintle mount.

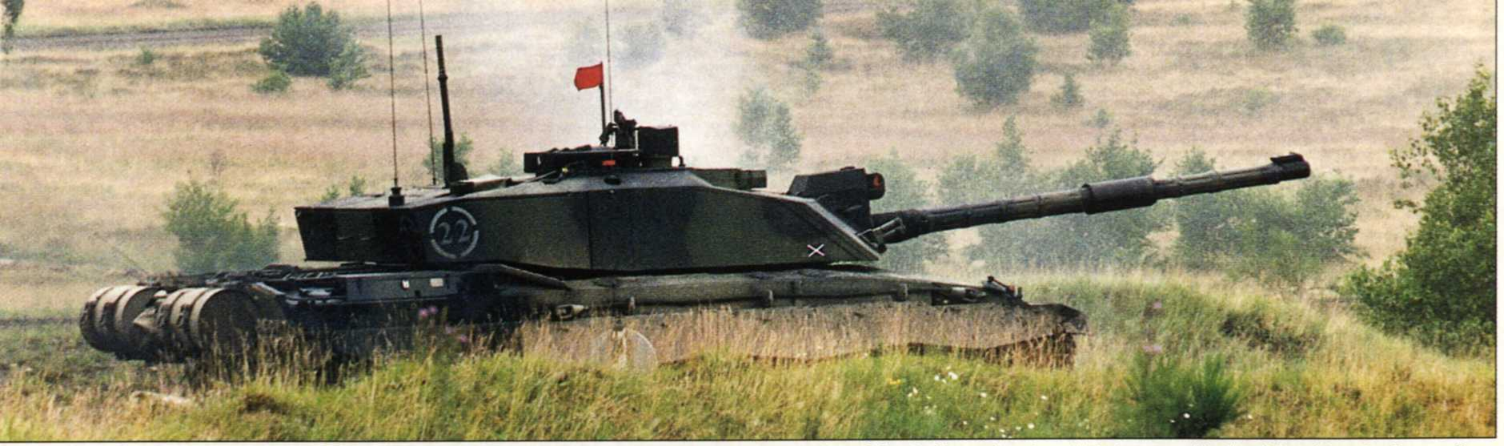


On 30th June of this year, Challenger 2 was officially handed over to the British army at Firing Range No.9 at Bergen Hohne, Northern Germany. On this day last June, the remaining 38 production Challenger 2 MBT's were handed over to the first regiment to be equipped, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys), at this time based at Fallingbostel, near the Bergen Hohne ranges.

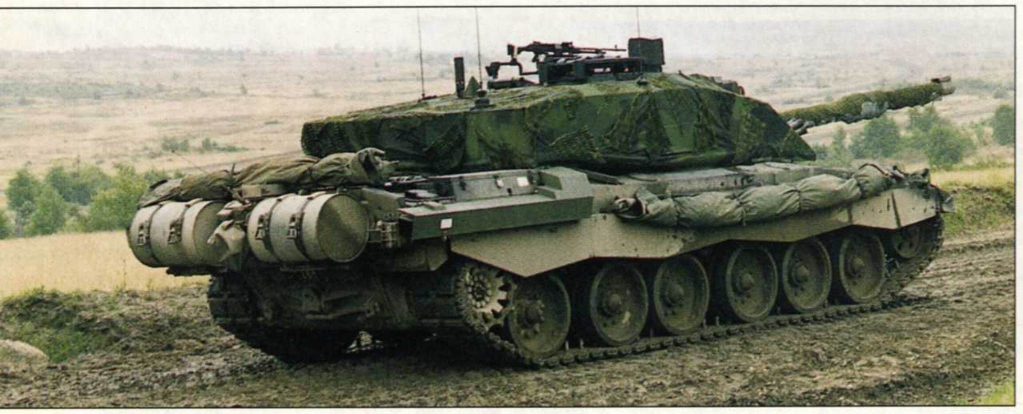
The hull and automotive parts of Challenger 2 are based on Challenger 1, but the new model incorporates more than 150 improvements. The turret, which is a completely new design, is armoured with an improved version of Chobham armour. The hull, which looks nearly identical to that of Challenger 1, features second generation hydrogas suspension, a hydraulically adjusted idler wheel and another first for a British AFV - double pin connected tracks. The vehicle also features external fuel drums, the contents of which can be pumped into the vehicle's main fuel tanks using a pump located between the drums.

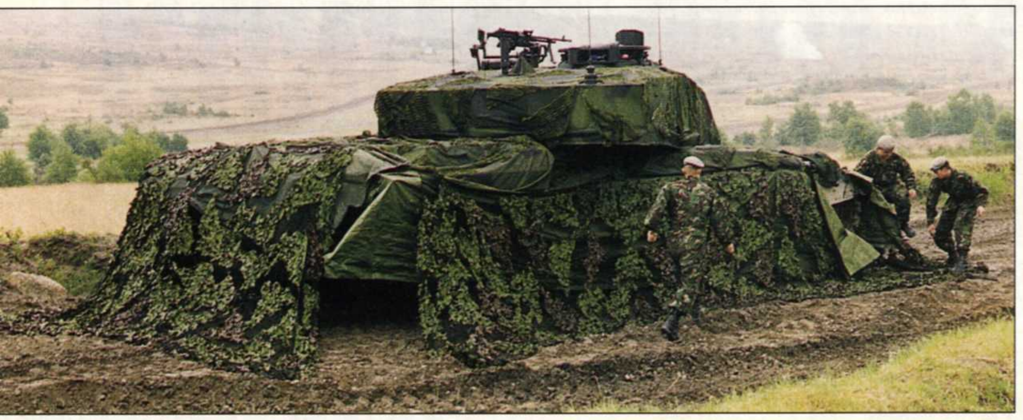
A total of 386 Challenger 2s will be built to equip the British army and act as the backbone of British armoured firepower well into the next century.

An export version of Challenger 2 is also produced and designated Challenger 2E. This vehicle features a more powerful engine, the

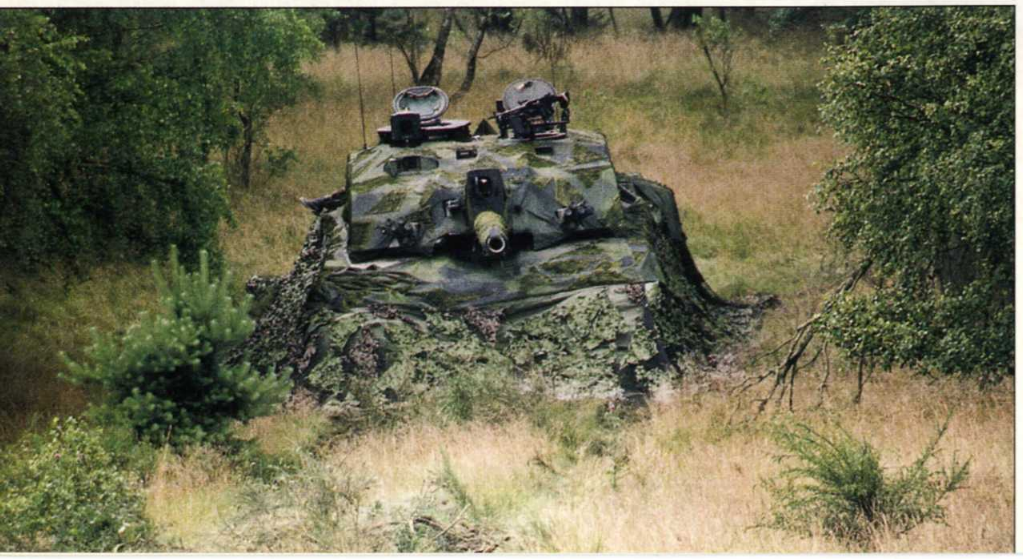


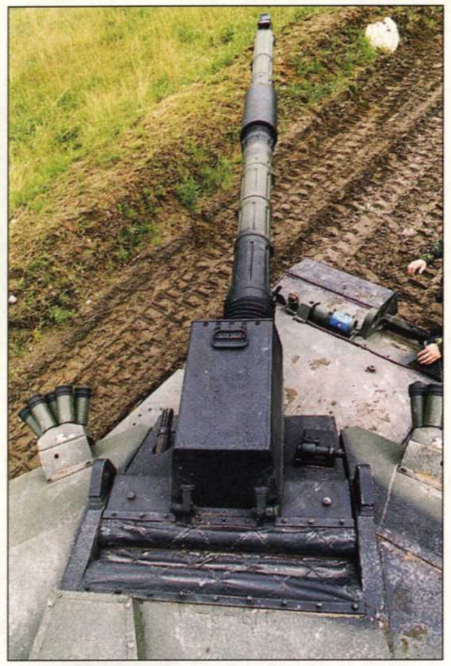
The low silhouette of Challenger 2 during a life firing exercise on Bergen Hohne ranges. The red flag indicates that the vehicle is engaged in live firing. Note the three radio antennae on the turret roof and just above the call sign there is a small meteorological sensor which provides data for the fire control system. This sensor is nearly covered by a larger antenna, the transmitter of LFME, the Live Fire Monitoring Equipment. The LFME, produced by the German company Wegmann, provides a video connection between the target acquisition systems of the vehicle and a shelter trailer, where the instructors monitors the actions of the tank commander and gunner. Cameras which are positioned to the rear of the firing ranges provide real time data of the target area and show where the shot hits.



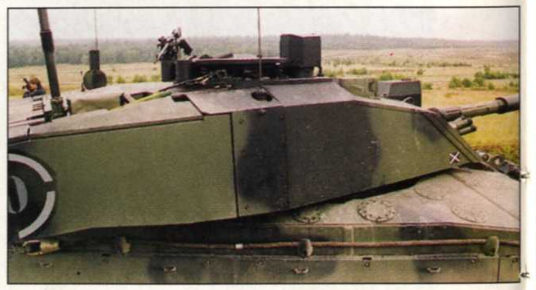


ABOVE: Troop trials were run to test a new camouflage system that enables the crew to camouflage the vehicle within two minutes. Rolls of cloth and camouflage netting are fitted to the vehicle's front, sides and rear. The turret is completely covered by cloth printed in a green, dark green and black camouflage pattern which look similar to the Norwegian camouflage colours and camouflage scheme. Additional green cloth in different shapes is fixed onto it, but leaving all turret vision devices open and operable. The rolls are opened and rolled downwards to the ground, where the camouflage nets are fixed with tent pegs. The gun barrel also is covered with a camouflage sleeve. BELOW: The camouflaged vehicle deployed between trees and bushes illustrates the effectiveness of the new camouflage system, which also provides a lower thermal signature. Note the openings for the vision devices in the cloth covering the turret.





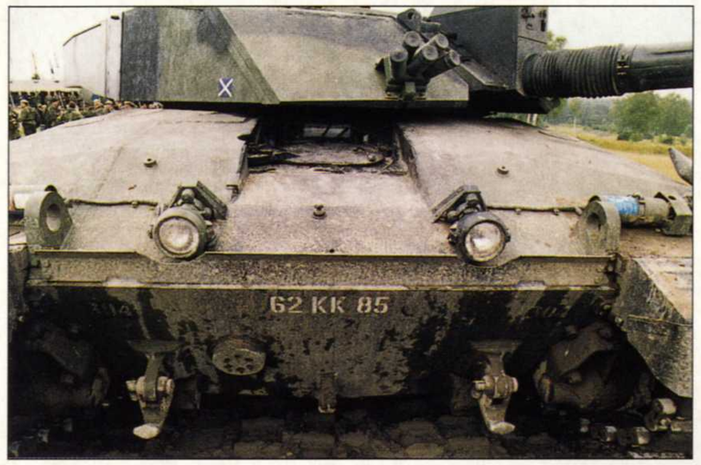
ABOVE: Top view of the TOGS housing and the 120mm L30 rifled gun. BELOW: The 'black' camouflage pattern sprayed over the standard green appears very dark grey or even very dark green in different light conditions.

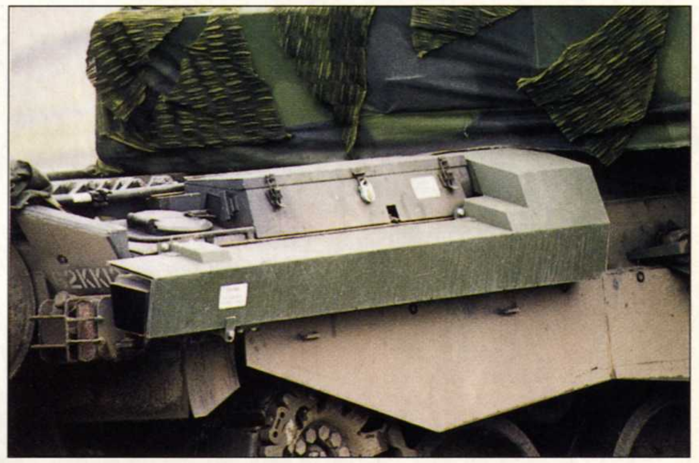


turbo-charged 1500 hp MTU883 diesel with a Renk HSLW 295 transmission with five forward and three reverse gears, both manufactured in Germany

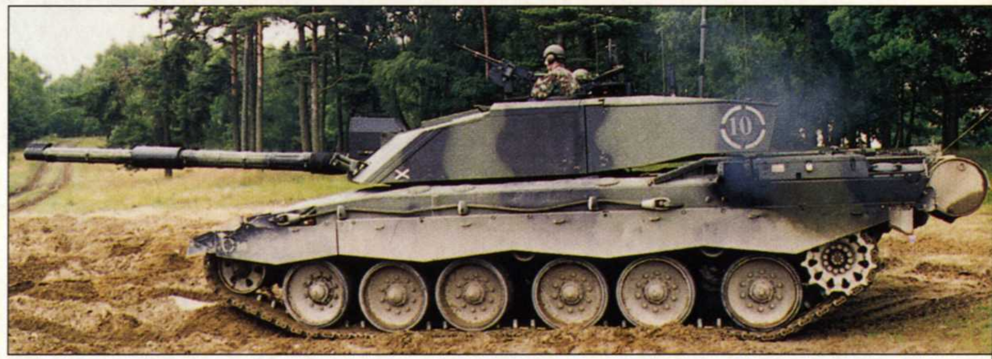
This article is not to provide more detailed technical information and readers should refer to an earlier MM feature on Challenger 2 by Ken Jones which provided excellent detail pictures and technical information. My intention is, mainly, to show the vehicle in its production status and in its 'natural environment'. Of direct interest to the modeller are the markings carried by the Royal Scots Dragoon Guard's vehicles, the first in-service vehicles of the Challenger 2 production run. Who will produce the first decal sheet? ■

ABOVE: Challenger 2 a second after firing its main gun, with smoke and hot gases venting from the gun barrel. The fastest engagement sequence ever recorded by Challenger 2 was run on a narrow firing range in Great Britain in 1996 using a pre-production model of the vehicle where, during excellent weather conditions, a Royal Scots Dragoon Guards crew engaged and destroyed six targets in 26 seconds! This is approximately half the time Challenger 1 would have needed to do the job. BELOW LEFT: Close-up of the vehicle's front end. Note the new type fire extinguishers and how dirt builds up after a hard ride through wet sandy terrain. BELOW RIGHT: Close-up of a device which will be a wartime fitting to Challenger 2. This device is called TEC (Thermal Exhaust Cowls) where a pipe system is fitted to the exhaust outlets on both sides of the vehicle to route the exhaust gases to the rear of the vehicle and also reduces its thermal signature to a minimum. Modellers note the turret camouflage material.

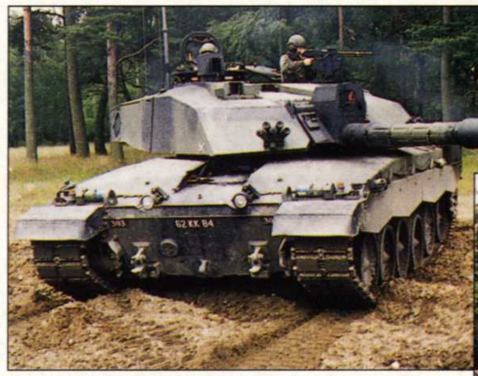


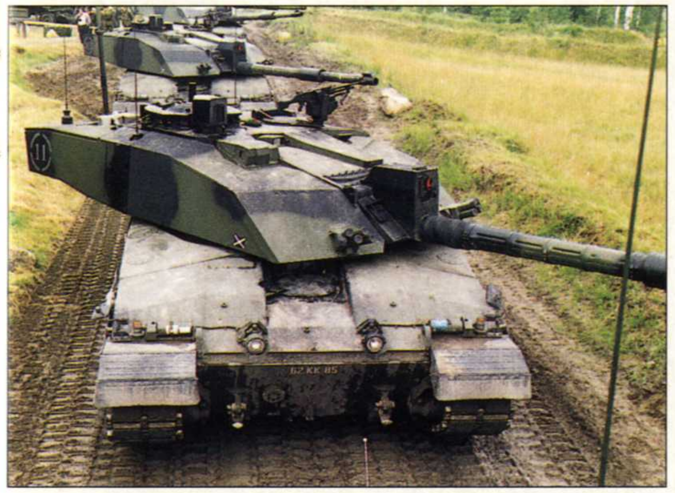


RIGHT: This side view shows an example of the markings the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards carry on their vehicles. Call signs within the squadron marking are painted both sides of the turret and also on the right rear plate. (Diamond 'HQ' Sqn; Triangle 'A' Sqn; Square 'B' Sqn; Circle 'C' Sqn). The squadron marking is repeated, albeit much smaller, on the first side skirt over the front idler wheel. Note the light grey colour and the design of the numbers, which is unusual for British call signs. The Saint Andrew's cross on a dark blue square is painted to both turret sides leaving no doubt that this is a Scottish Regiment! Clearly visible on the rear of the vehicle in this picture are the greasy remnants of burnt diesel fuel from producing a smoke screen making the camouflage colours look darker and can be compared with the appearance of colours after diesel is spilled during refuelling.

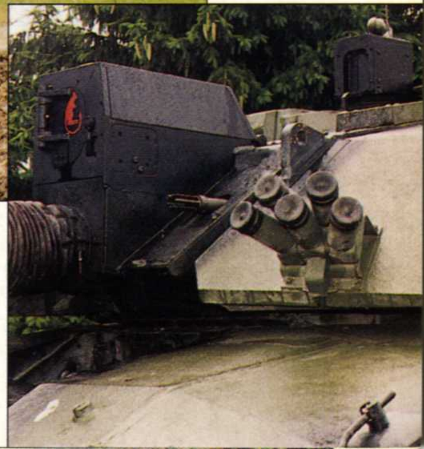


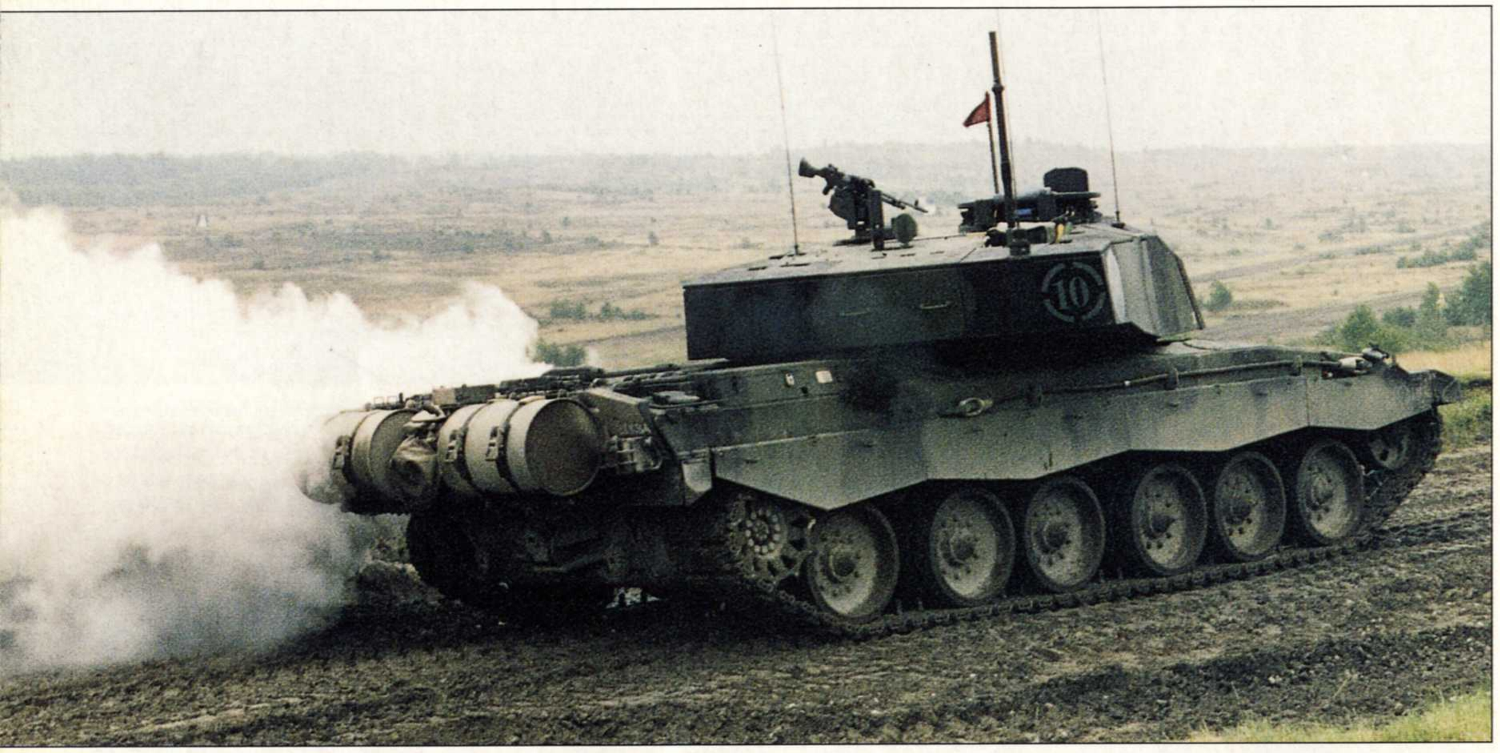
BELOW: The tank driver is 'closed down', whereas the commander observes the area through his opened hatch and the loader operates the 7.62mm GPMG. A total of 4,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition for the co-axial Chain Gun and the GPMG are stowed. Additional mountings for the dozer blade UDK-1 from Pearsons Engineering are welded to the front plate. The raised, circular object is the electrical connections to power the dozer kit from the vehicle's systems.

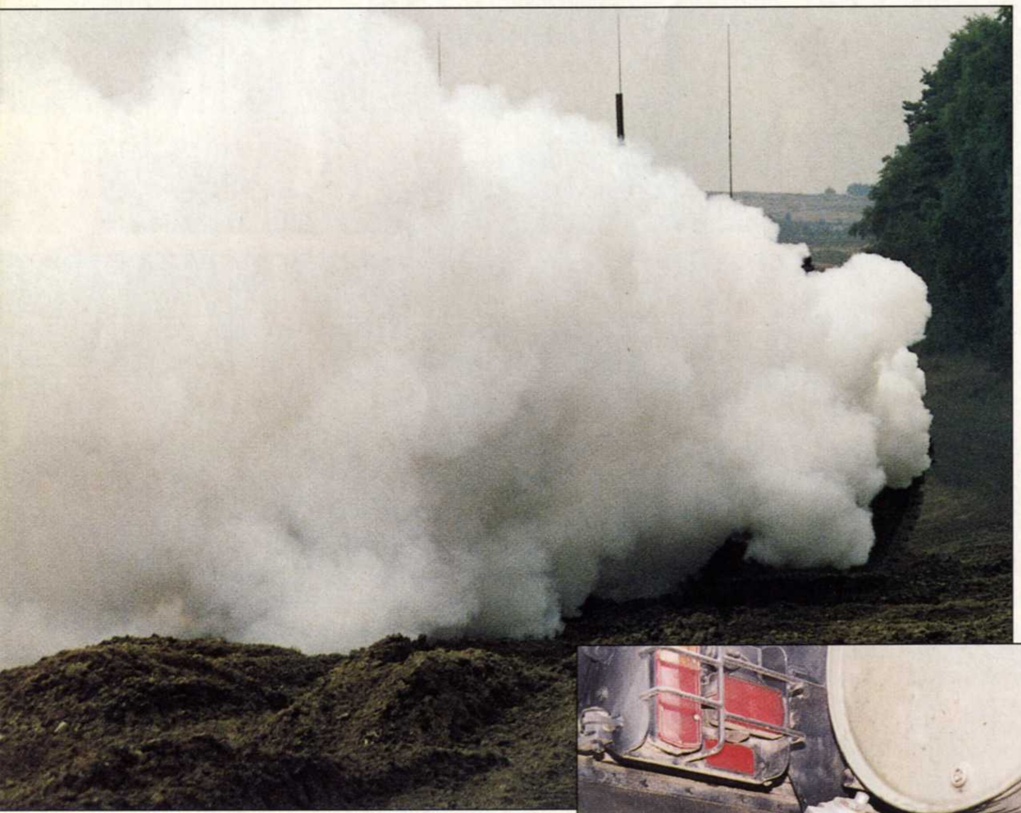


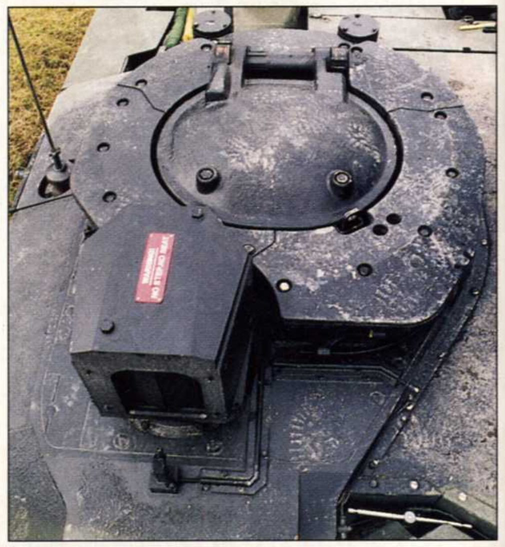


ABOVE: All three vehicles lined up here show (nearly!) the same black areas of the camouflage pattern, which is very unusual for the British army. This may have been because the three vehicles were taking part in an official display and ceremony. RIGHT: Close-up of the turret front. Note the red Jerboa painted onto the door of the TOGS housing. The slotted flash suppresser of the co-axial 7.62mm Chain Gun is visible.

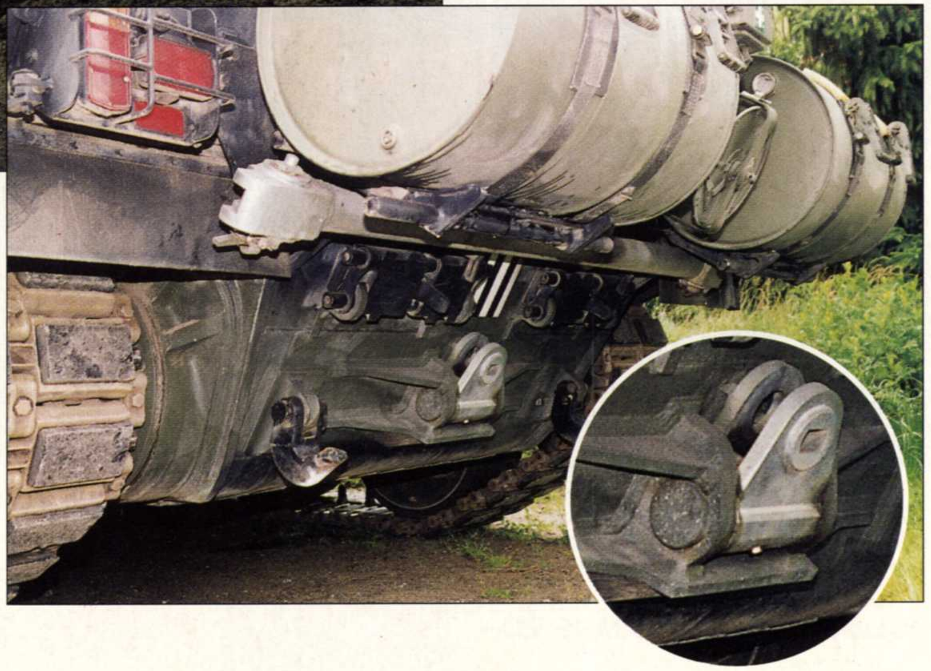






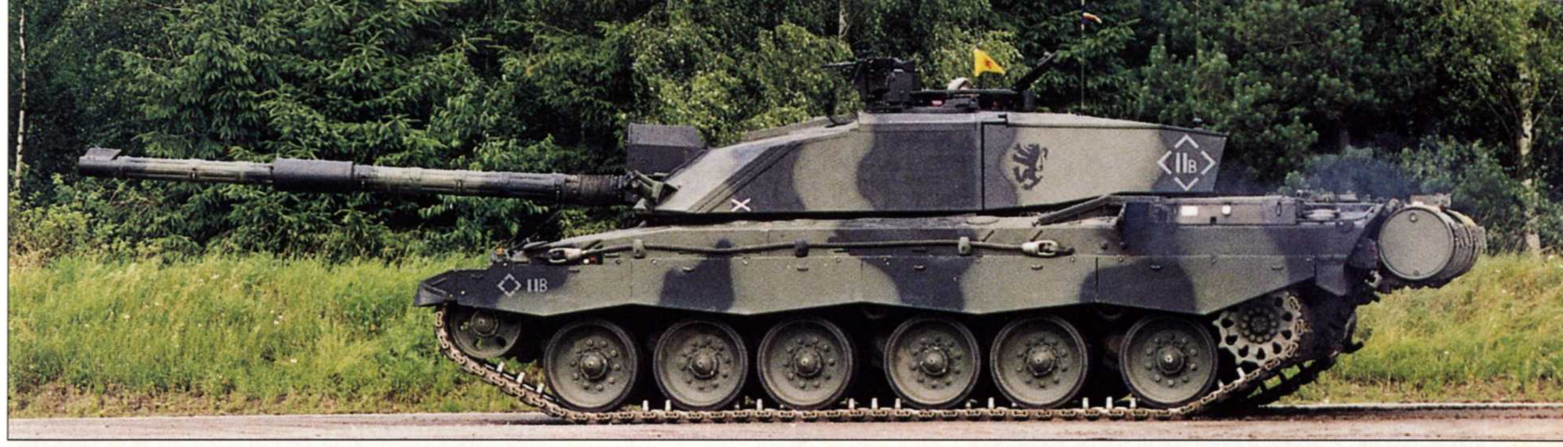


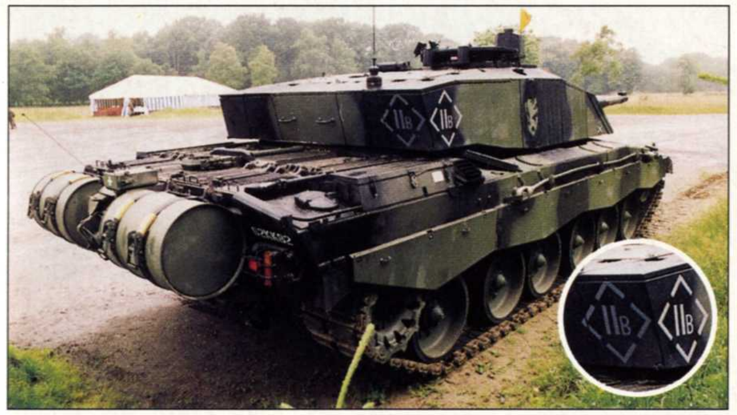
ABOVE: The commander's hatch with the stabilised sight in an armoured housing. Note the water jet in front of the sight to clean the optic.

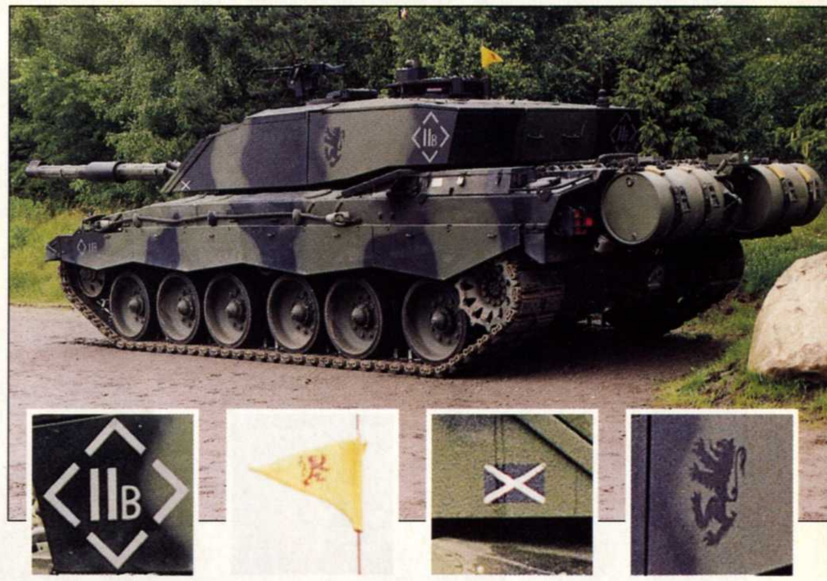


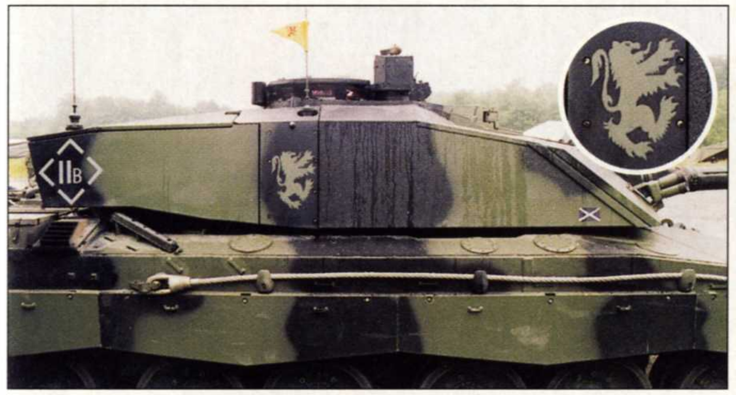
ABOVE: A very effective smoke discharging system is fitted to the exhaust outlet of Challenger 2. Diesel fuel is injected into the hot exhaust gases and burns in white clouds. This equipment can lay a smoke screen from either or both exhausts. Modellers note: producing this smoke makes a greasy dark stain on the vehicle's rear.

RIGHT: Close-up of the equipment on the lower hull rear. Note the black spare track links and the towing bar and towing hook which remain in their light natural metal colour. The fuel drums, in a lighter colour here, are usually painted in normal camouflage pattern. They have a build-up of dust and dirt after a hard cross country ride.

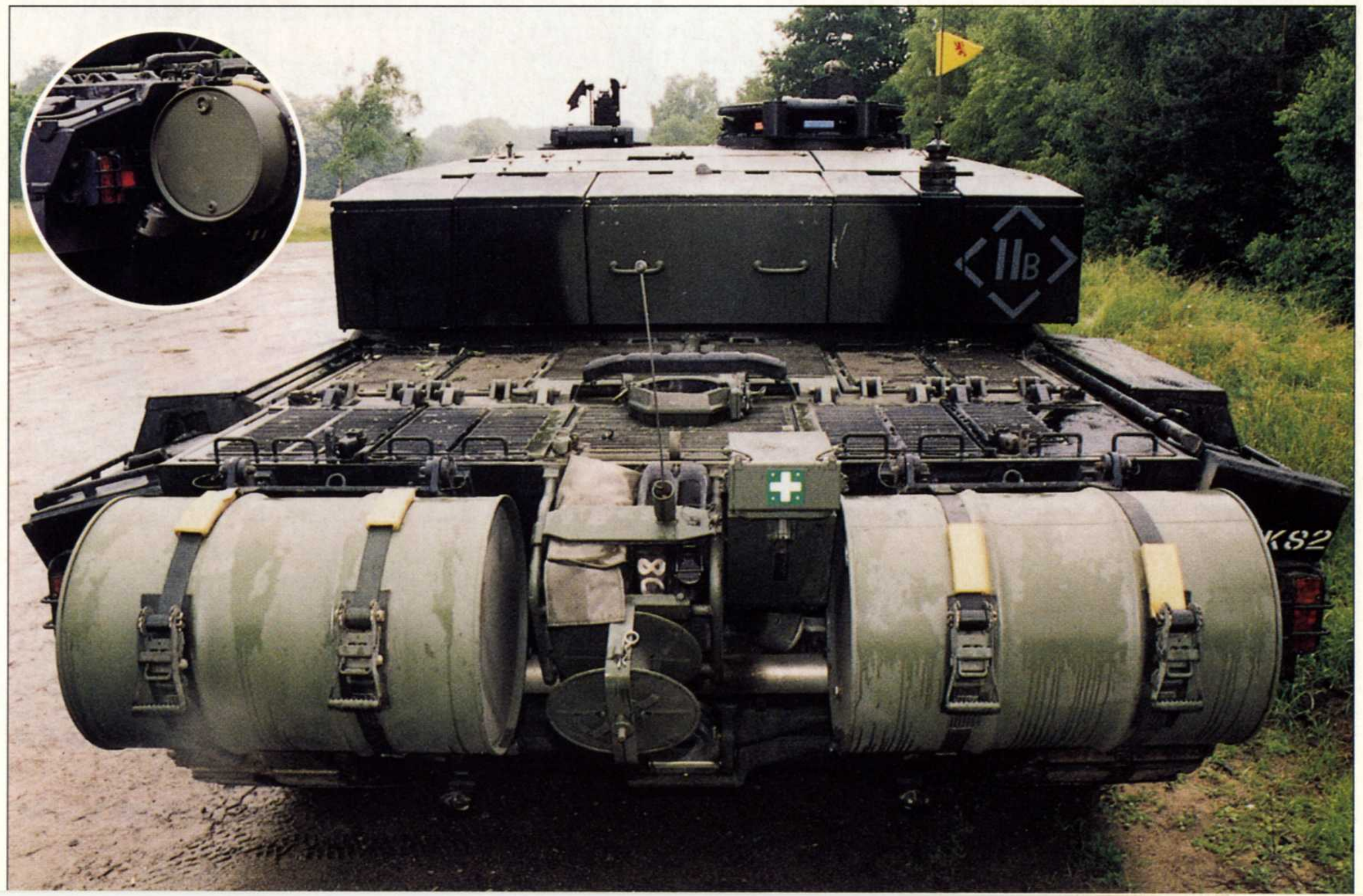




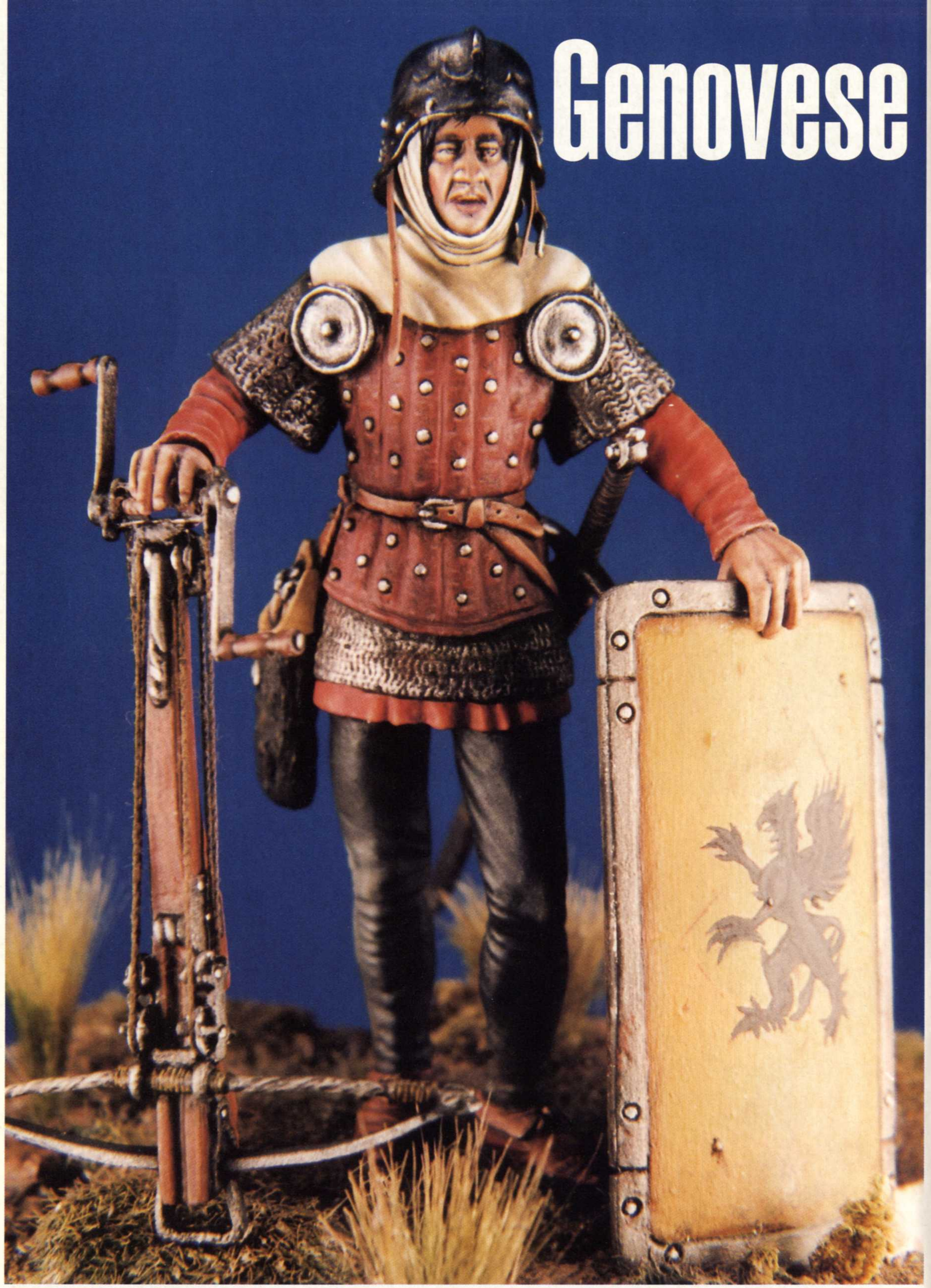




This is the Commanding Officer's tank, showing the call sign '11 Bravo' in a diamond sign. Additional markings on this 'special' vehicle include a lion painted to both turret sides. All further markings are placed as on the other vehicles. Also note the small yellow pennant on the rear aerial which shows the lion painted onto it in red. The CO's tank crew (and his Land Rover driver) wear a yellow arm patch bearing a Red Lion rampant of Scotland. See this patch (via Gary Gibbs) at the beginning of the article. This tank would make a good model subject using either Cromwell Models or Accurate Armour's 1:35 scale kits - both Scottish manufacturers!



Genovese Croswsbowman



Phil Kessling offers a Border Miniatures figure conversion

A friend of mine, who is also a collector, asked me to paint a figure of a Genovese crossbowman for him. He had developed an interest in The Hundred Years' War after reading several historical works on the period. It sounded like an interesting project and one that I looked forward to doing. I was also preparing a painting seminar for the World Expo '98 and decided to photograph the figure step by step, as I painted it.

I selected an early Border Miniatures' casting of a French Crossbowman as the basis for the project. It is a little smaller than the later Border releases, scaling out at around 65mm. Since I prefer to change the heads on my figures, I was presented with the challenge of finding a suitable head in this scale. I finally settled on one of the heads from the Beneito 'Three Captains of Villar' vignette. The head fitted well and seemed to be appropriate to the subject. After the sallet was cut-off, the head was ground out with a motor tool. The new head was attached to the figure and some traces of hair were sculpted with Kneadatite (Duro) putty. I also re-sculpted the cowl folds, utilising Magic Sculp putty **(Photo 1)**. The hands were cut off the casting and the ends of the sleeves were hollowed out with a drill bit and a hobby knife. **Photo 2** shows the figure primed and ready for painting.

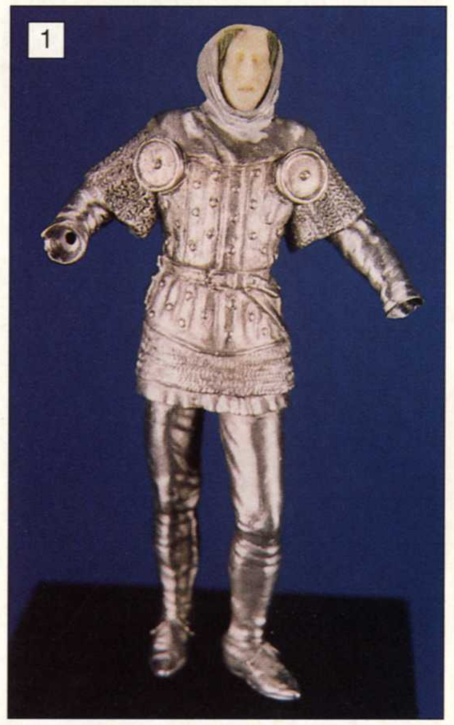
Face

The eyeballs were painted with a light blue-grey acrylic. Polly S Black mixed with Earth Brown was used to paint the irises. I highlighted the irises with a little Polly S Yellow Gold. The lower eyelids were painted in Mars Orange and the upper eyelids in Blue Black.

The base flesh colour was a slight variation from my normal mixture: Mars Brown + Mars Yellow + Titanium White. The intent was to give the figure a more Mediterranean-looking skin tone. Shadows were painted with a mix of the base Flesh + Mars Brown + a dab of Raw Umber. For the beard area, I mixed in a little Blue Black. Brown Madder + dab of Lamp Black was used for the deep shadows; Blue Black was used for the deep shadows in the beard area. Jaune + Titanium White was the mixture for the highlights; more Titanium White was added for the light highlights.

Leggings

The base colour for the leggings was: Mars Black + Raw Umber + Mars Yellow + dab of Titanium White **(Photo 3)**. This mixture yielded a very dark green, that looked Black until the shadows were painted in. Blue Black was used to paint the shadows **(Photo 4)**. Notice the contrast between the base colour and the shadow colour. The highlights were the base colour with the addition of more Raw Umber, Mars Yellow and Titanium White **(Photo 5)**.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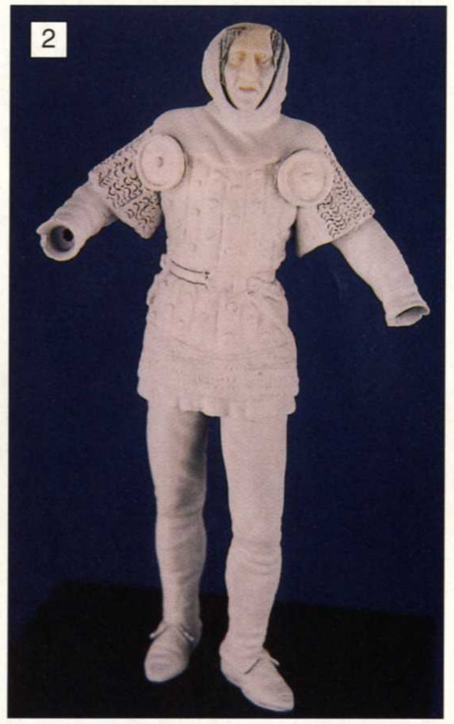
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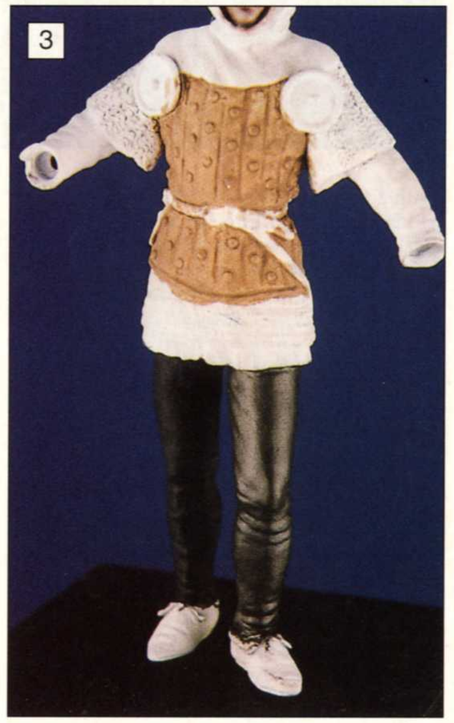
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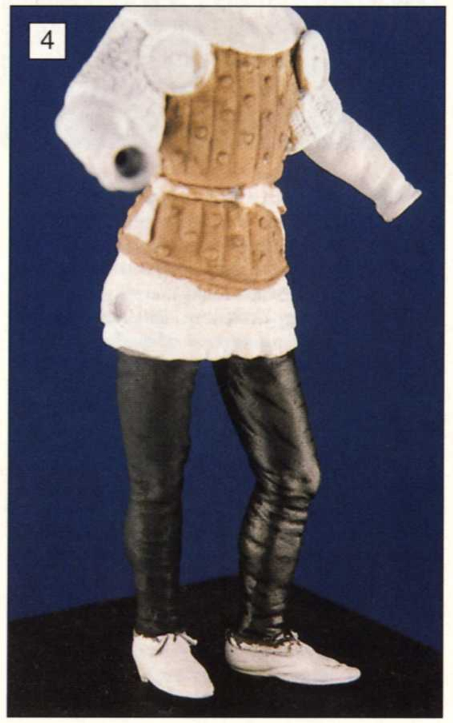
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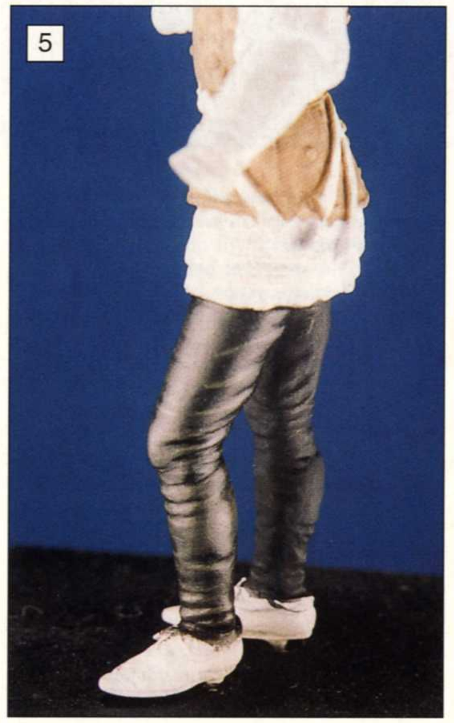
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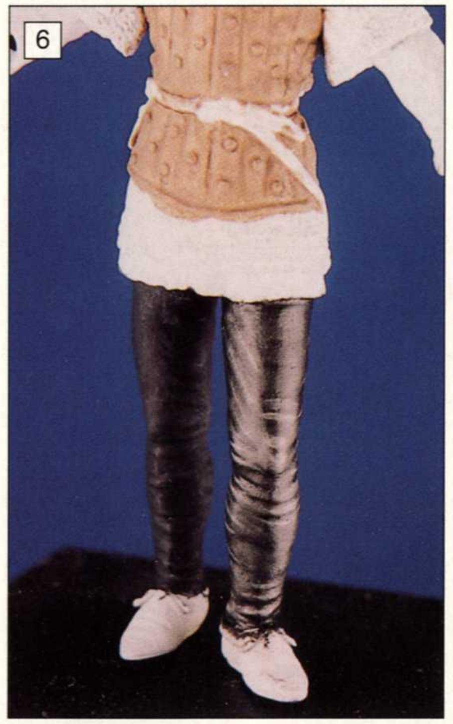
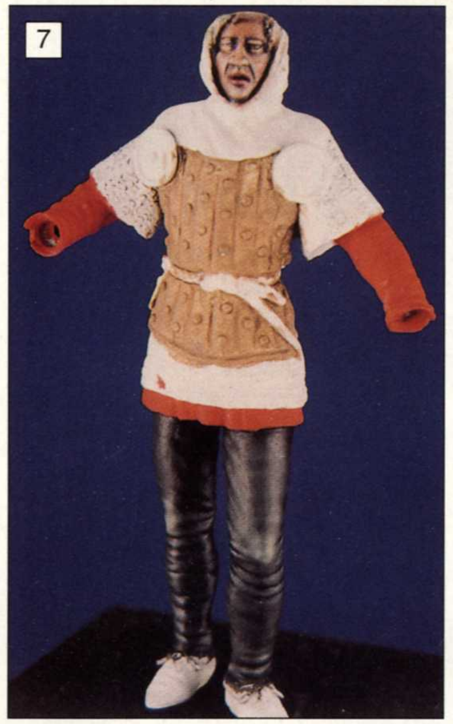
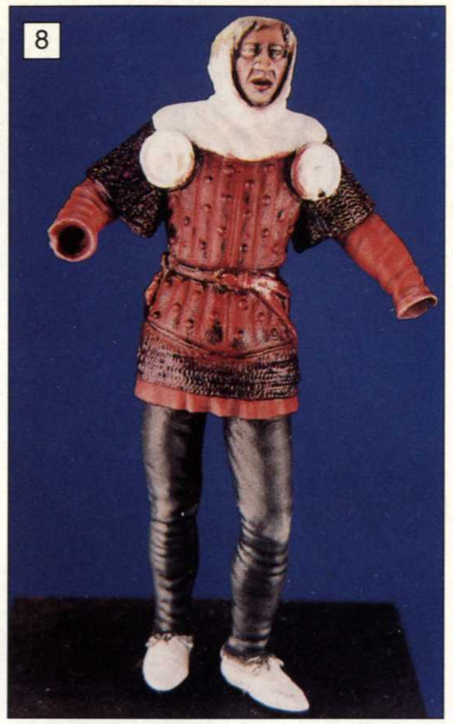
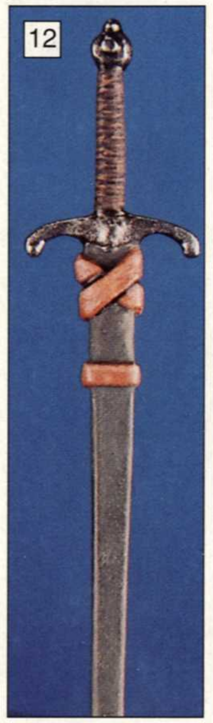
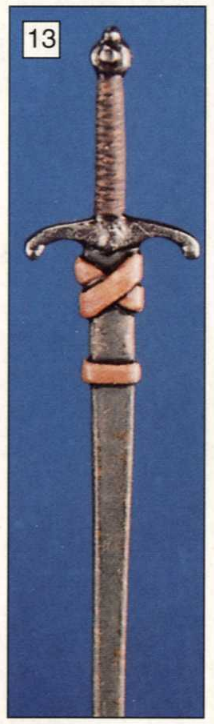
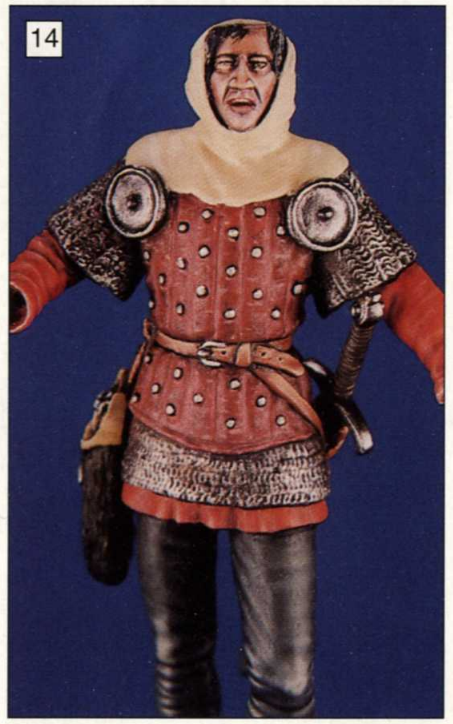


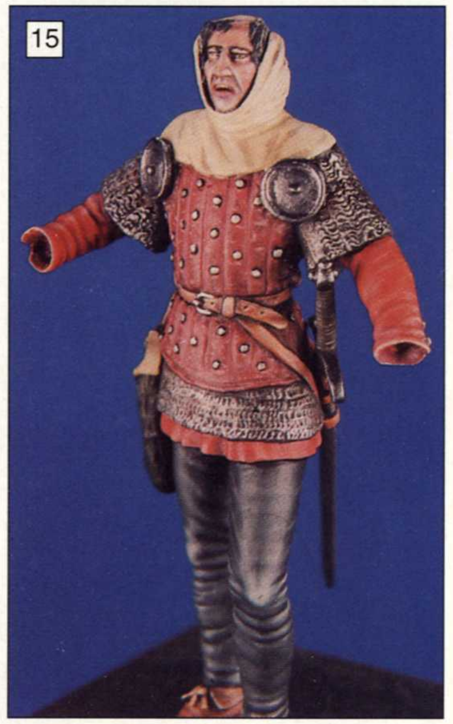












Final highlights were painted with the addition of more Titanium White to the highlight colour **(Photo 6)**.

One of the secrets to painting black is to always start with a dark blue, dark green, dark brown or dark grey for the base colour. This allows for shading with black. The finished leggings are shown in **Photo 7.**

Red Tunic

Base: Cadmium Red Deep + Mars Yellow.
Shadows: Base + Carbazole Violet (DS).
Deep Shadows: Shadow + Blue Black.
Highlights: Base + Mars Yellow + dab of Cadmium Yellow + Titanium White.
Light Highlights: Highlight + Titanium White.

Jerkin

While researching the figure, I consulted several books which contained photographs of Medieval re-enactors. In every instance where a re-enactor was wearing a quilted article, I noticed that it was darker in the normal highlight areas, from dirt and wear. Whereas the stitched folds were lighter and showed the original colour. Realistically painting this characteristic of quilted clothing, proved to be an easy task, but seemed unnatural during the painting process.

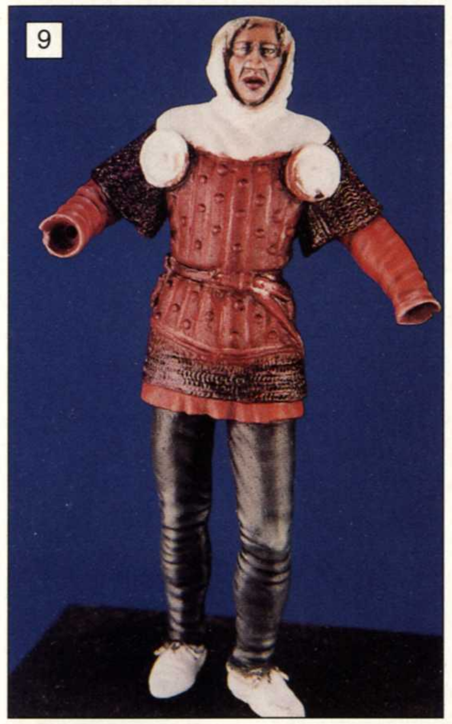
The base colour was Pyrrol Red (DS) + Talens Red Purple (Rembrandt) + a dab of Mars Violet. Shadows were the base colour + Mars Violet + Burnt Umber; deep shadows were the shadow colour + Blue Black. I intentionally avoided painting the shadow colours in the stitched areas. Finally, the deep shadow colour was stippled on to what I considered the high wear areas **(Photo 8)**. A highlight of the base + Buff Titanium (DS) was painted along the edges of the stitched seams **(Photo 9)**. Fine wrinkles were painted in Buff Titanium (DS) utilising short random strokes with a fine brush **(Photo 10)**. The finished jerkin with the addition of a black undercoat (Vallejo Acrylic) on the rivets and armour is shown in **Photo 11.**

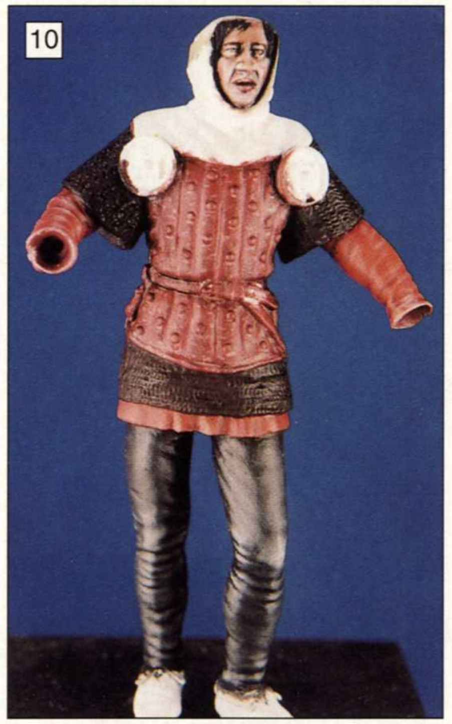
Mail

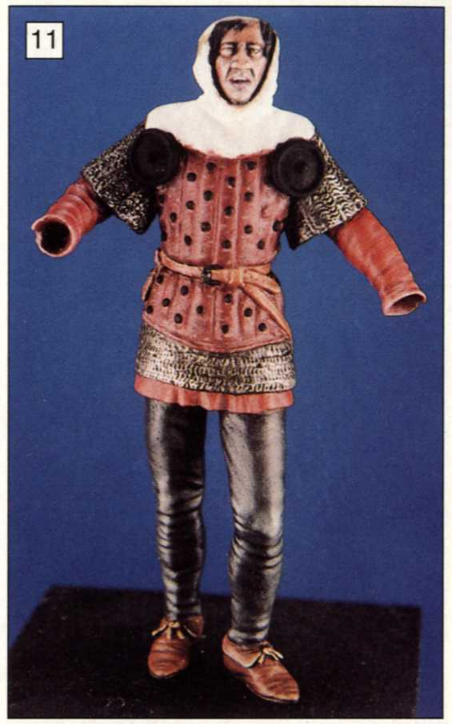
Base: Humbrol Red + Humbrol Black.
Highlights: dry-brushed Silver Oil + Sepia (Rembrandt).
Light Highlights: dry-brushed Silver Oil + dab of Raw Umber.
Random rust was simulated with thin spot washes of Mars Red and Burnt Umber.

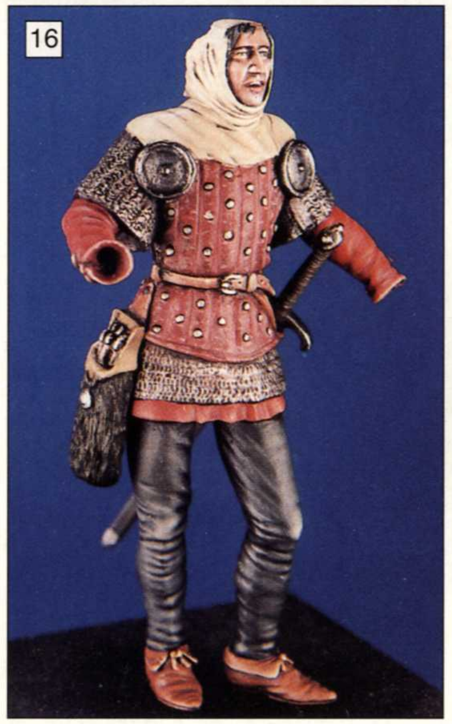
Shoes

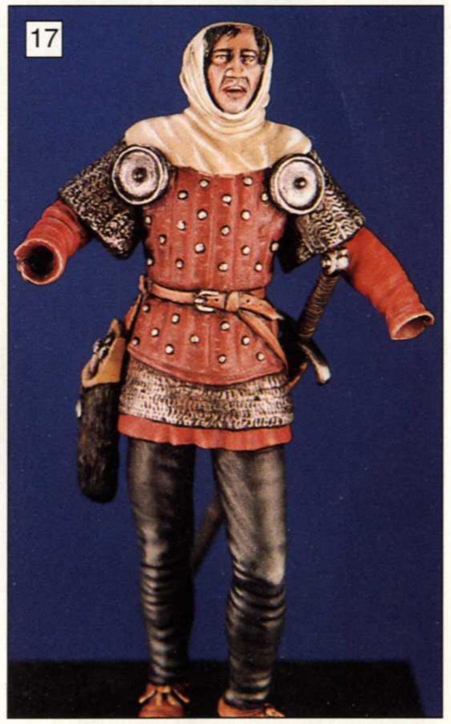
Base: Mars Orange.
Shadows: Mars Brown.
Deep Shadows: Mars Brown + Mars Black.
Highlights: Mars Yellow + Titanium White.
Light Highlights: Highlight + Titanium White.

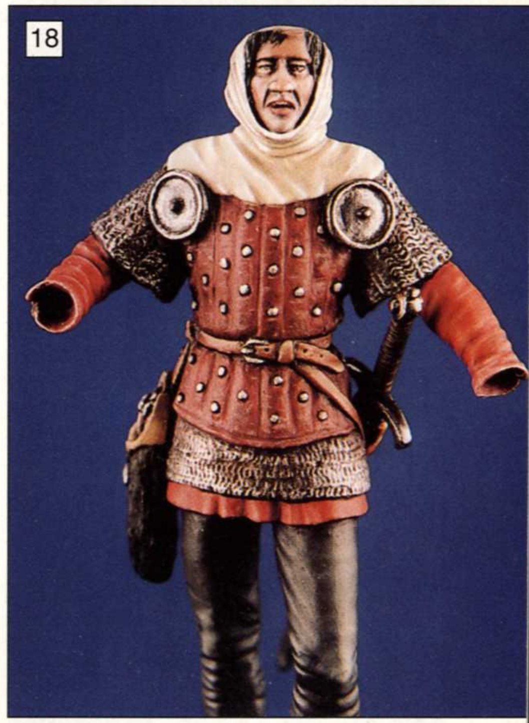












Scabbard

The scabbard was undercoated with Liquitex Burnt Sienna - an acrylic from the jar. A base colour was mixed from Lamp Black and Mars Yellow. The edges of the scabbard were highlighted by adding Titanium White to the base colour. After drying, the straps and hilt were outlined with Mars Black **(Photo 12).**

To show signs of wear, I 'distressed' the scabbard. This was done by randomly stippling on a little Mars Brown + Mars Orange. An even lighter colour, Mars Yellow + Mars Orange + Buff Titanium, was randomly stippled on after the first colour had dried. Neither of these steps were blended. **Photo 13** shows the finished, distressed scabbard. All metal parts were painted with Gunze Sangyo Mr. Metallizer Iron.

White Cowl

Mike Blank, in my opinion, does a great job of painting white. [*See his article on this very topic in the last issue, Vol. 28 No. 14. Ed*]. So, I decided I would try to copy his technique, substituting oil colours for Humbrol enamels. The base colour was a light Khaki, mixed from Buff Titanium + Raw Umber + Mars Yellow **(Photo 14)**.
Shadows were painted with a mix of the base + Sepia (Rembrandt) + dab of Raw Umber **(Photo 15)**. I added Lamp Black + more Sepia for the deep shadows **(Photo 16)**. The highlights were painted with pure Titanium White **(Photo 17)**. After this dried, I repainted the highlights with pure Titanium White again **(Photo 18)**.

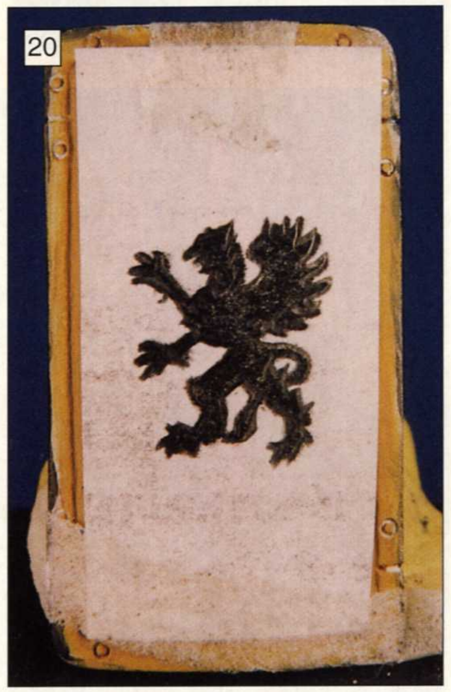
Pavise.

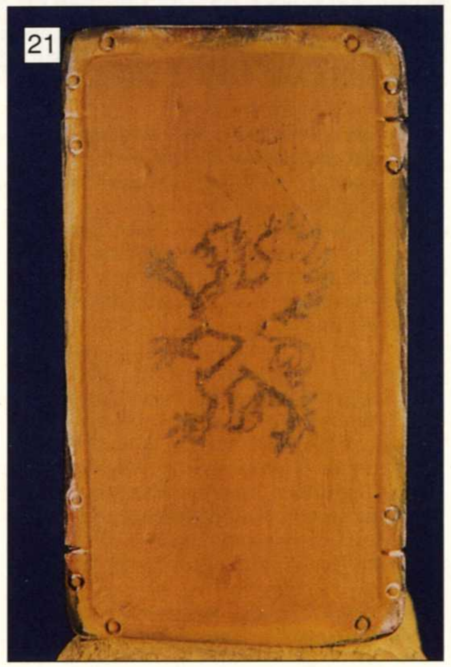
I painted the back of the pavise as if it were made of oak. The base colour was Quinacridone Gold (DS). I used Sepia for the dark grain and Buff Titanium for the light grain. The grain pattern was slightly different on each plank; I used the floor next to my painting table as a guide!

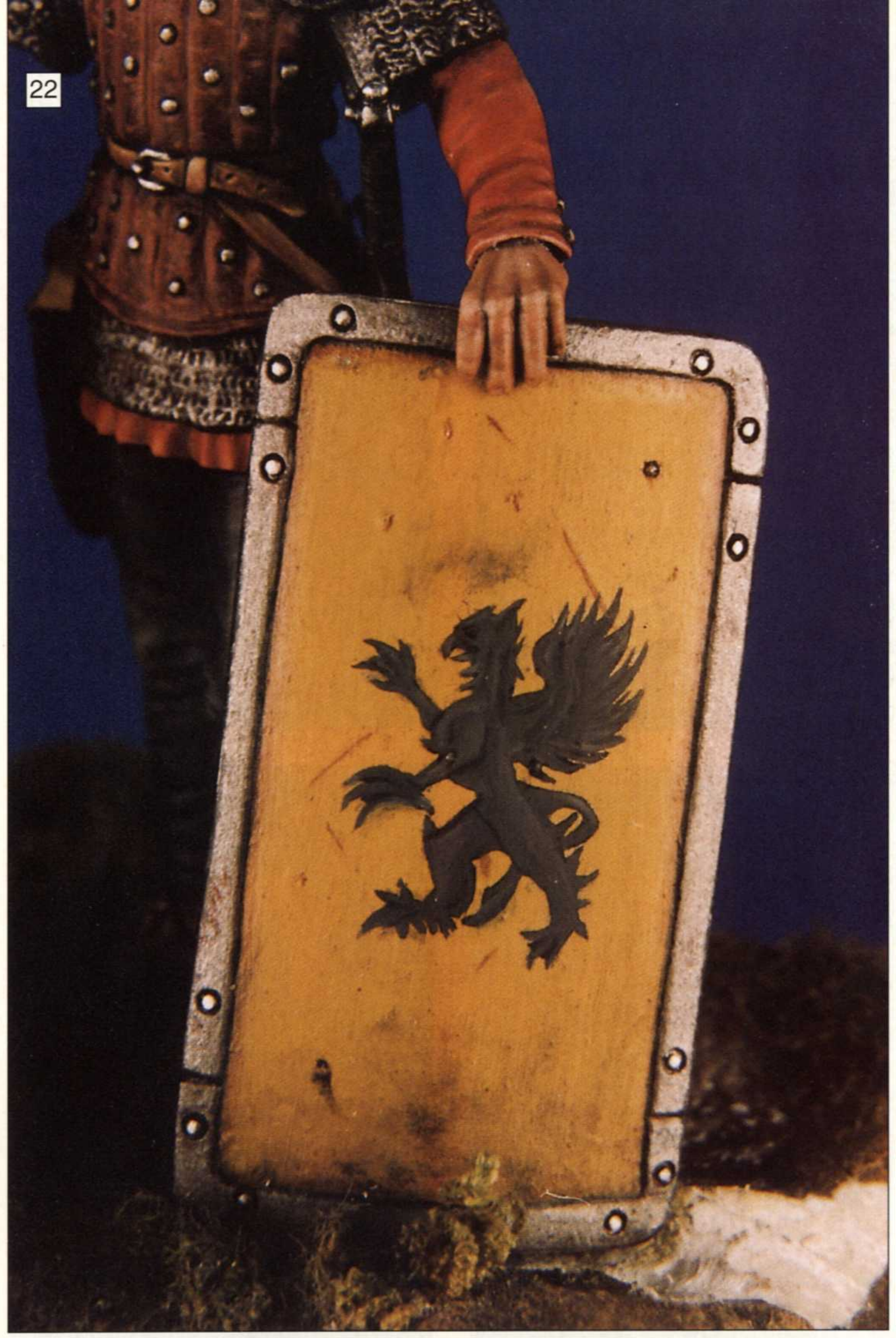
The back of the pavise was very lightly blended with a large soft brush. Over blending would obscure the grain pattern. The back of the pavise is shown in **Photo 19**.

The pavise face presented a research problem. I could not find any descriptions or illustrations of Genovese pavises. Most existing pavises are from a much later period (15th century) and from Eastern Europe. My references also indicated that there may not have been any Genovese Crossbowmen present at Agincourt. However, there was historical documentation for the presence of a Genovese Crossbow contingent at the Battle of Crécy. This still did not solve the problem of the pavise heraldry.

I finally solicited the aid of an Internet Pen-pal in Italy, Gianluca Ricoveri. Although







he does not live in Genoa, he had a friend who did. After several weeks, he provided me with the option of either a Yellow Griffin on a black shield or a Black Griffin on a yellow shield. I thought the yellow shield face was more complimentary to the figure.

I undercoated the face of the pavise with Liquitex Burnt Sienna acrylic. Mars Yellow was the base oil colour which was shaded with Mars Brown. While this was still wet, I used a toothpick to scratch through to the undercoat, depicting cuts and wear. I selected an appropriately sized griffin from a Nimix photo etched heraldry sheet. The griffin was then copied on a photo copier. A soft pencil was rubbed on the back of the copy. The copy was then positioned on the pavise and attached with paper medical tape **(Photo 20)**. A sharp pencil was used to trace over the griffin, leaving a light pencil outline on the pavise face **(Photo 21)**. The griffin was undercoated in Vallejo Black acrylic. I used a base oil colour of Lamp Black + Buff Titanium for the griffin. Details were painted in with a shadow colour of Mars Black and highlights were added with Buff Titanium. The finished pavise is shown in **Photo 22**. I have found this technique of tracing on heraldry to be very effective both on shields and surcoats.

Groundwork

The finishing touch was to place the figure into its environment. Research indicated that it had rained on the morning of the Battle of Crécy and that the crossbowmen were positioned in low terrain.

A rough terrain of grass and dirt was depicted using my normal techniques. Mud puddles were added with an acrylic floor finish, tinted with a tan acrylic paint. Some of the 'muddy' water was washed onto the figure's shoes and lower legs. Finally, chalk pastels were dusted on the figure and groundwork. The finished figure is shown in the heading photograph.

Availability

Border Miniatures, Fernlea, Penrith Road,
Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4LJ.
Vallejo Acrylics - Chiltern Miniatures,
Rembrandt Artists Oil Paints - Cross's,
119 Sandgate Road, Folkestone,
Kent CT20 2BL
Kneadatite Epoxy Putty (Duro) -
Optum Hobby Aids, PO Box 262,
Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3FR ■

'Pick of the crop'.
Dragon's model T-34/85.

Choosing the Best!

Bruce Crosby surveys the current crop of 1:35 scale T-34/85 kits for AFV modellers

The T-34 was one of the most widely used tanks of all time. It was a real surprise to the Germans when they invaded Russia and it was so good they almost built a copy of it. With typical German engineering overkill they built the Panther instead which, although a fine tank, could not be produced fast enough and was finally overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of the T-34.

Due to the set backs the Russians had early in the war, the design of the T-34 with the 76mm gun was frozen to maximise production. Once the immediate danger was over they had the luxury of time to plan how to reverse the war in their favour. The T-34/85 was an attempt to upgun the vehicle at a time when the Panther could sit back and pick off Russian tanks from extreme range. A new larger turret was developed and the ZiS-S-53 85mm gun was installed. This model went on to win the war. The 85mm gun really was not a match for the Panther as it could not penetrate the frontal armour until new BR-365P ammunition became available in the summer of 1944, but it was extremely effective against the most common German tank, the *PzKpfw IV Ausf H/J*.

As the Russians needed as many T-34s as possible they centralised production as much as they could. Three main factories undertook production, with outlying sub-contractors supplying wheels, turrets, engines, etc. They were located at Kraznoye Sormovo Zavod Nr. 112 in Gorki, Zavod Nr 174 in Omsk and Zavod Nr 183 in Nizhni Tagil. The latter factory had produced 35,000 tanks by May 1945, an outstanding achievement by any standards. This particular factory had been moved from Kharkov to the Urals, lock stock and barrel, putting it well out of range of German bombers.

The factories had to adapt the basic design so that the machines already installed there could produce the tank. If the local plants didn't have large enough casting facilities for the complete turret, they made turrets which were fabricated from two sections, called the 'composite' type. Aficionados can tell where a particular vehicle came from by looking at tell-tale turret shapes. The Soviets didn't produce personnel carriers, so the T-34 doubled up as an infantry carrier. Grab handles were welded on the hull and turret sides and the infantry just held on as best they could.

The vehicle was crude and noisy and tended to shake and rattle a lot. This was due in part to the fact that the engine was mounted solidly to the chassis, no anti-vibration mounts here! Add the fact that there were no shock absorbers (only springs), the track was all steel and there weren't any exhaust silencers! There was nothing in the way of crew comfort or decent ergonomics, unlike its counterparts the Cromwell and Sherman which were positively lavish by comparison.

Since 1945 the T-34/85 has been used in practically every conflict you can name. T-34s were active in Korea, the Middle East, Vietnam, etc. Of course, they were eventually made obsolete by newer tanks, but they have certainly left their mark on history.

Post war the tank was refined and developed further by the Soviets and production was also undertaken in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

I admit, I have left out a lot of development detail, but I want to get on to the models, not write another T-34 history! Besides, it's been done much better by others - see the reference list at the end of the article.

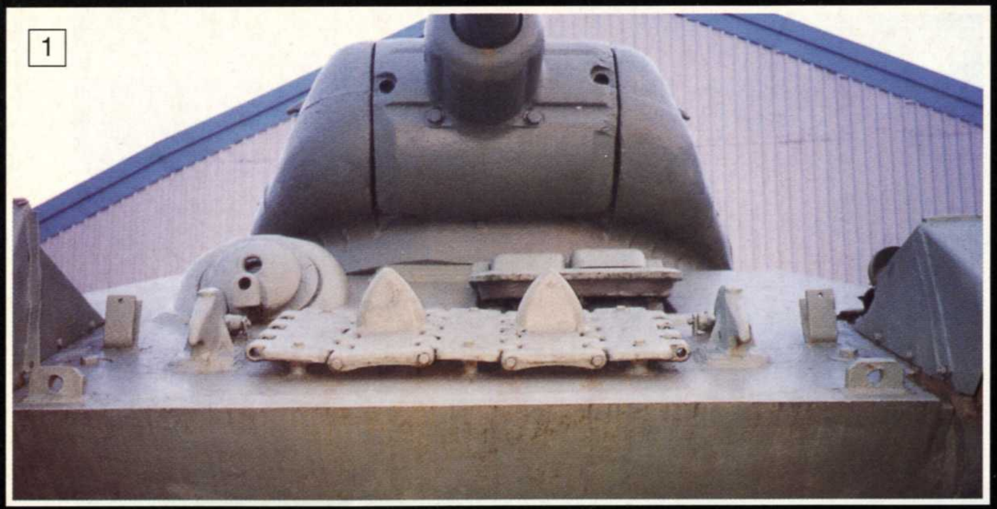
Available models

At the current time the market is awash with T-34/85s. Tamiya have re-released theirs, there are ones from Italeri and RPM/Maquette, and new into the market, brash as ever comes Dragon. Prices range from cheap to 'silly money' and then there are all of those add-ons from the resin and etched brass producers. So first off let us assess what the kits are like, what you get in the box and whether or not they are worth the asking price. Then we will look at some after market parts and see if they are up to standard. There are no added extras to these models except where the kit parts just were not up to scratch, or poorly moulded.

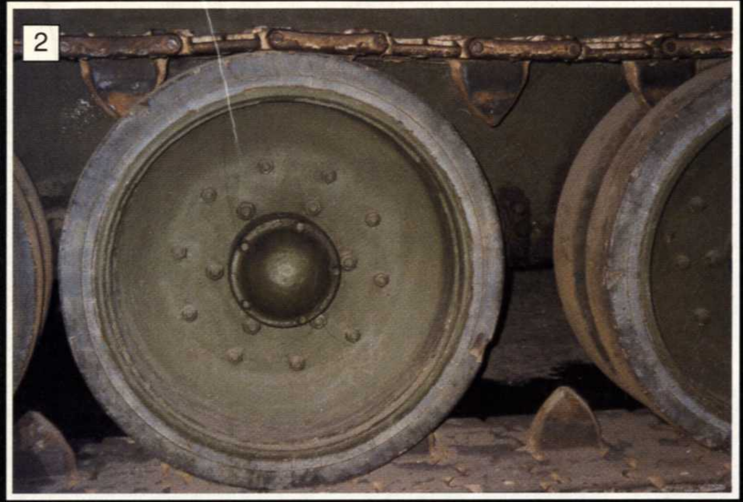
Part of the assessment procedure entailed a trip to The Tank Museum at Bovington to take a look at two of the T-34/85 tanks there. I went down with Vasko Barbic who, in the past has written in this magazine about Soviet tanks. We went armed with camera, tape measure and protractor and had a really good day out. Bovington has changed a lot in the 20 years I have been going there, but it is still the best place to go in the UK for first-hand information. You really can't argue with a big lump of steel - just measure it, divide by 35 then check the kit!

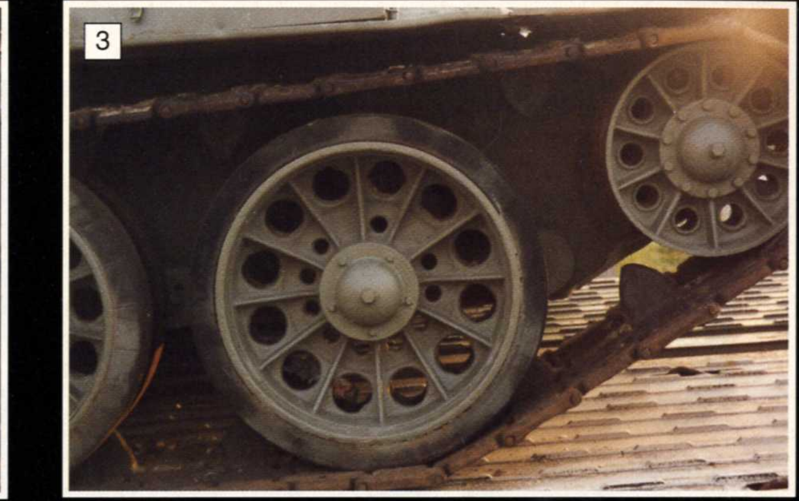
The two vehicles were an ex-North Korean tank with angle-jointed turret, and a Czech/Polish produced vehicle with a smooth turret. I say Czech/Polish as I'm not sure which it is, but it definitely isn't Russian built. Measurements of the armour plates were within millimetres of each other, angles were identical. In fact the only difference I could see was the width across the mudguards, the Czech/Polish tank was much wider. That was a function of the fenders, not any difference in the main armour which was identical on both vehicles. Even though the wheel styles were completely different, the hubs were identical, as were the tyres.

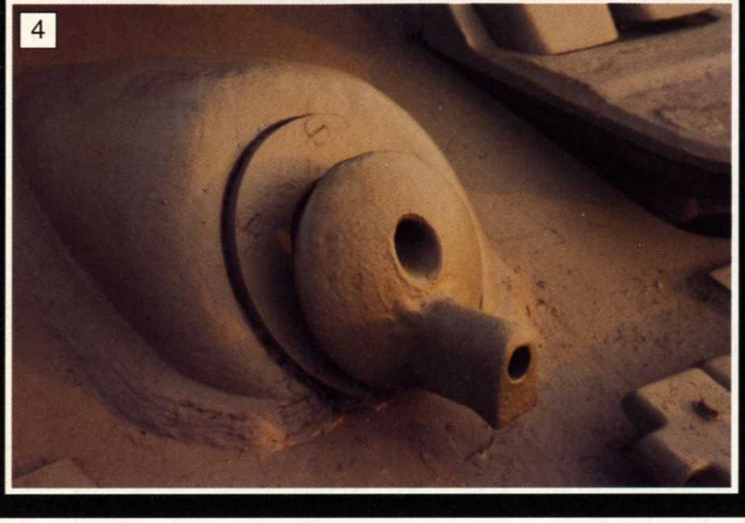
Once we had a load of measurements they were plotted on my computer as full size measurements, which were then divided by 35 to get 'in-scale' values. This saves having to work out everything with a calculator and takes about two seconds! It was just a case then of checking

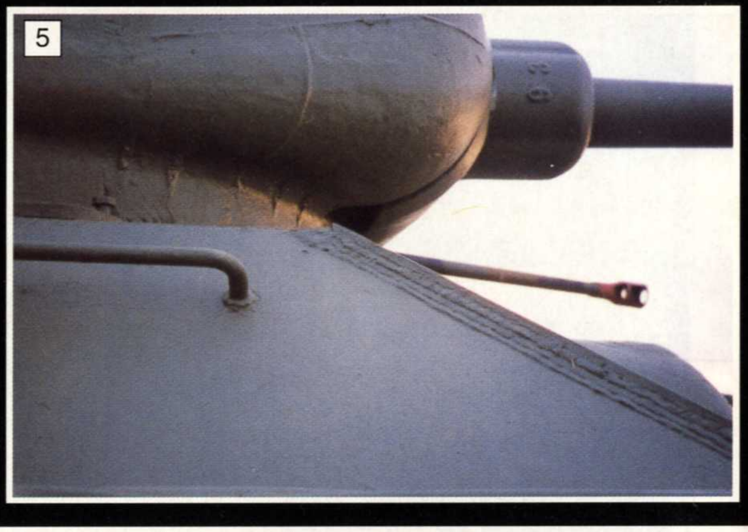


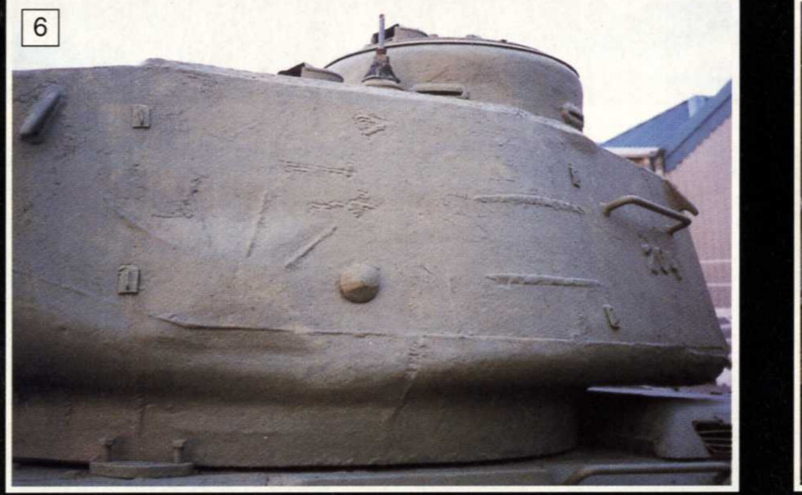
1. Post-war T-34s, especially from satellite countries, show remarkably smooth armour compared to Soviet built wartime examples.
2&3. Early plain disk and later 'starfish' pattern road-wheels fitted to T-34/85s.
4. The hefty and prominent armoured cover complete with sight aperture for the hull 7.62mm machine-gun common to all T-35/85s. Note the very thick weld seam around the base of the casting where it joins the glacis plate.
5. Prominent, but neat, hull front to side weld seam.
6. The turret sides reveal small pips and imperfections. The circular knock-out pistol port plug in the turret side is a simple device for close-in protection of the vehicle. Note the prominent casting number under the handrail.
7. The line along the bottom of the turret side is where a seam has been ground off and is not a welded join. Note the handrails, tie down cleats and small splash guard under the turret rim hull top join.

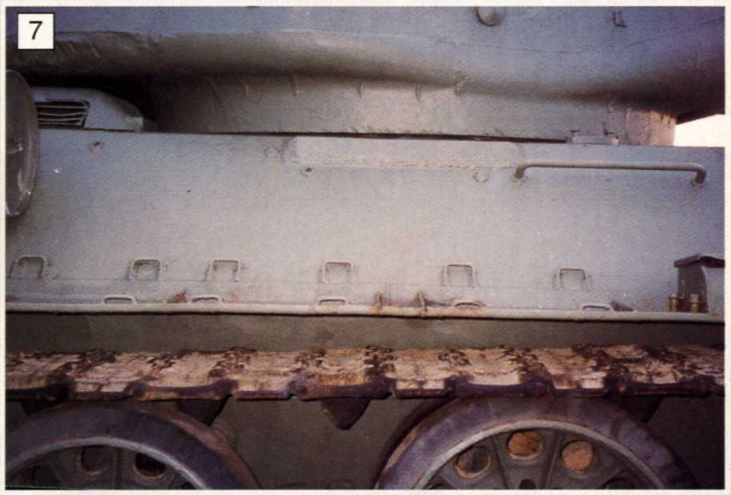












the kits with protractor and callipers. I also e-mailed Steve Zaloga in America who very kindly sent me dimensions of T-34s he had measured up as a comparison. They were identical to the ones Vasko and I took. So it seems that ALL T-34s have very exact basic measurements, never mind how roughly finished off they are. At the end of the article is a table with real measurements, the same measurements divided by 35, and then the actual kit measurements. You can decide for yourself which one to buy.

A general note on the turrets, except for the Maquette/RPM item. The top and bottom halves of the turret are NOT welded together, so do not add a weld seam between them. The turret is a one piece casting and the mark around the base is where the flash is ground off - just like a big plastic kit really. This same point is also applicable to Dragon's Joseph Stalin 2 tanks. I keep seeing models where the modeller has gone to great pains to replicate a huge weld seam that just is not there.

One thing very noticeable on all T34/85s, however, is the amount the turret base overhangs the hull top at the sides and front. It is in the region of 5cm (2 inches) and adds considerably to the look of the vehicle.

Tamiya (Kit No. MM138)

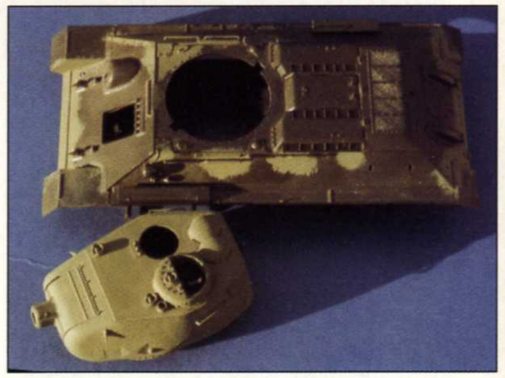
The first kit on the market, Tamiya's T-34/85 is 10 years old. This was originally a re-tool of the earlier T-34/76 1942 and 1943 kits, which date back to the mid-1970s. All Tamiya did was add a new turret sprue and change the front mud guards.

They did not rework the wheels while they were at it (they are from the '76 model 1942), and ever since the 'resin boys' have been selling wheels by the truck load! Typical of Tamiya, the original hull moulding was neat and crisp, though somewhat inaccurate. To get the hull to '85 configuration a few small fillet pieces have to be added near the turret ring and a new squared-off nose piece has to be fitted. All very simple and easy. Major drawbacks though, are the incorrect angles and dimensions; the sides are too shallow by 5°, which makes the hull top about 2mm too wide. It does not sound like much, but it is enough to make the kit look suspect.

The instruction sheet is typical Tamiya: well-designed and presented. What more is there to say? Box art, again typically good.

The chassis has all the holes and fitting points for motorising, there is nothing in the way of chassis escape hatch or engine access hatches and all the suspension arms are moulded on. The front idlers fit onto a metal axle which can be positioned to tension the track. There is the usual polycap wheel assembly. All this is from the days when Tamiya did not know if they were building scale models or toys. On the plus side it is very easy to assemble.

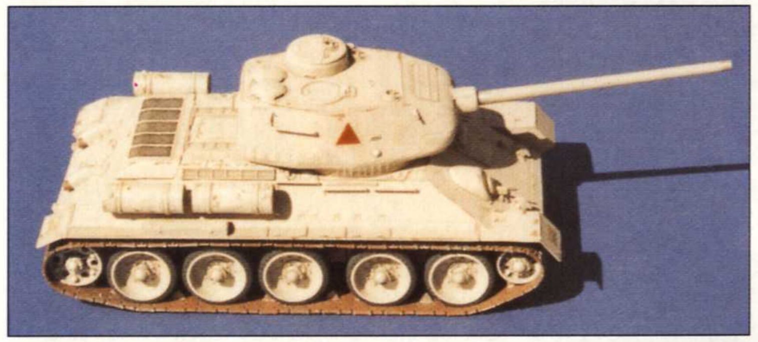
The turret represents the common 'flattened' type. It is extremely simply moulded for a kit from Tamiya and just does not have the 'feel' of a T-34/85. It seems to be too fat behind the rear of the cupola, and is about 2mm too short. There is a glaring hole under the turret ventilators which needs to be plated. If the real one was like this the Germans would have destroyed even more of them. I carefully sliced off the ventilator domes and filled the hole with plastic sheet cut to shape. Two small sections of thick sprue were added as the fan bases then the domes were glued back in place over the top; putty added where necessary. The turret has grab rails and lifting points, but there are no tie-downs at the rear; make them from thin wire or plastic rod. Is the prominent overhang there at the base of the turret? No, in fact, the turret sits in from the sides of the hull. There is nothing wrong with the quality of the moulding, no flash and the fit is good. It just does not look right.

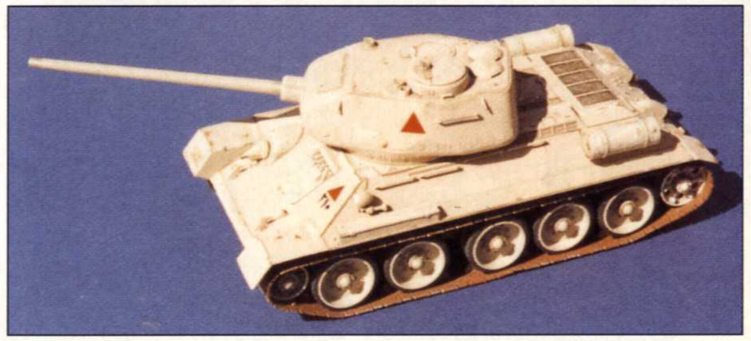


The kit has the same old vinyl track as the originals. It's not bad but there are better solutions out there. For instance the RPM/Maquette track retails at £4.50 or thereabouts and will transform the sit of the model. The kit wheels are marginally oversize and could be replaced with resin items; see the list at the end of the article for suppliers.

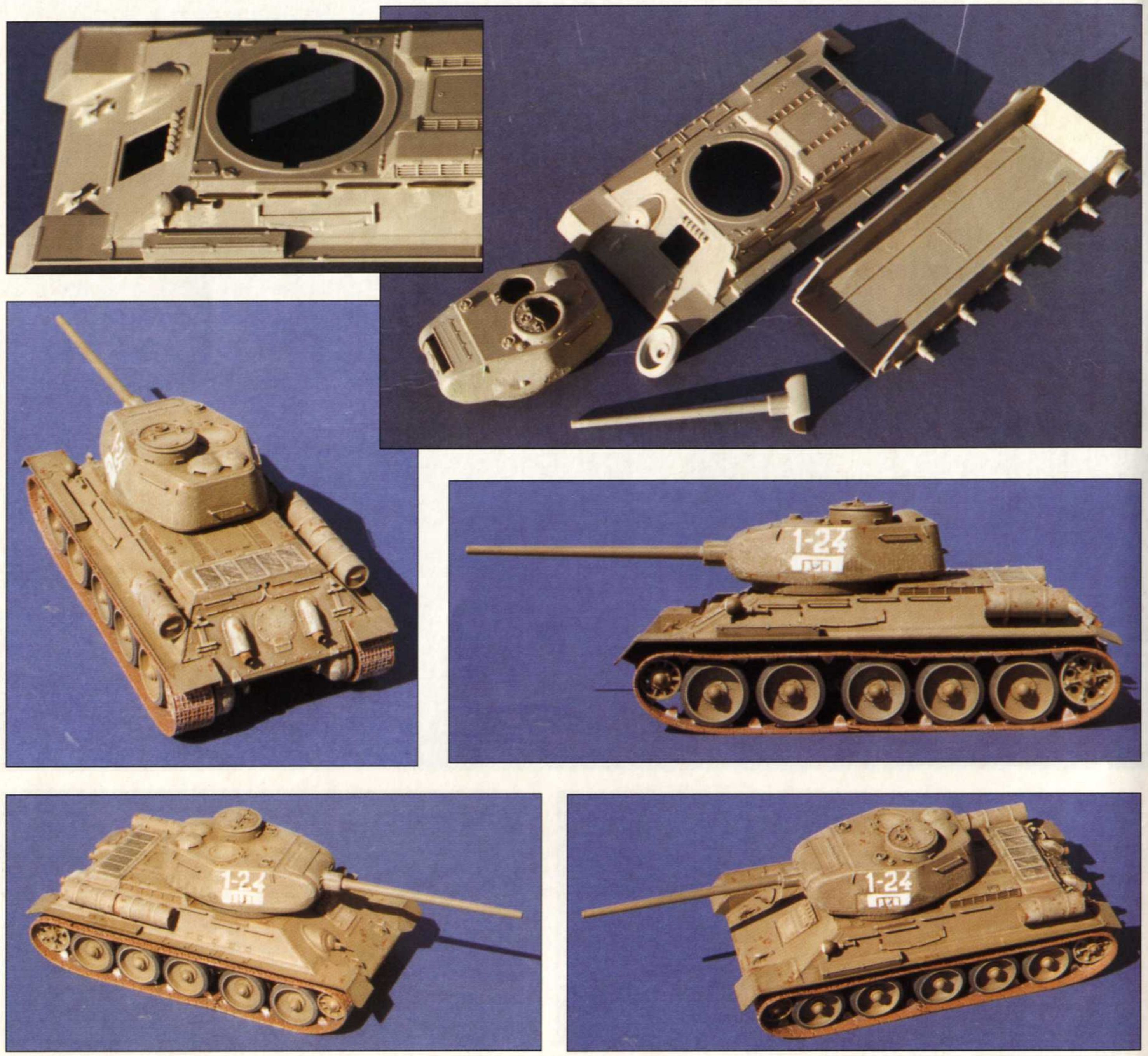
The model was painted light stone to represent an Egyptian vehicle from the Arab-Israeli wars. Decals were from the VB range.

Tamiya's model builds easily from the box, but really isn't that accurate. There are plenty of add-ons that are specifically made for this kit so it may be the one for you.





Tamiya's T-34 kit is now over 10 years old but still shows excellent qualities of plastic moulding. Here finished as an Egyptian army vehicle.



The Italeri (nee Zvezda) kit finished as Lieutenant Goncharenko's vehicle, the first into Prague - plain green with hand-painted markings. Hull and turret handrails were replaced with ones from wire.

Italeri (Kit No. 295)

This kit is a re-badged Zvezda kit and is available at an extremely cheap price. It is moulded in quite brittle medium grey plastic and does not really look that good on first inspection. Looks, however. can be deceiving, and the more I saw, the better it got. There is none of the expensive tooling associated with Tamiya or Dragon, so the chassis is not a tub, rather it's built up from flat plates. It depicts another common type of turret ('angle jointed') and has the dished wheels with non-pierced tyres, which although simple, are quite good when painted up. As the tyres are non-pierced they date the vehicle to 1945, so for anything before that the modeller will have to obtain the correct pattern wheels. The tyre tread is fairly narrow though as well as being too great in diameter and the wheel bolts look undersized. The wheels in my kit had suffered from poorly-aligned moulds, and there was a fair bit of flash on them as well.

I ended up watching a film on TV while I cleaned them up. For those interested, the film was *Escape to Athena* with David Niven, Telly Savalas and Roger Moore all hamming it up like crazy - a lousy plot, but some really great vehicles!

The kit tracks are OK for the price, but not brilliant in the overall scheme of things. They come in a silvery plastic, in two lengths per run. They are detailed inside and out, but somehow still manage to look like plastic strips. Most modellers will consider replacing them with something (anything!) better. I only left them on so you can see what you get for your money. Because they are stiff and do not bend very easily I had to resort to the time old method of getting track to sag - I drilled holes just above where the track ought to be and inserted strong brass wire to hold the track down. It still looks terrible though!

There are two cables supplied in plastic which look horrible! Keep the ends but replace the middle with picture wire or nylon string.

The turret is practically the same shape as Tamiya's, but much better proportioned. It is narrower at the rear and a fraction longer. Not by much, but enough to change the outline. The cast texture is just a little overdone, maybe a light sanding will help here. There are separate pieces for the vision ports on the turret side and commander's cupola. The gun shield is sharp, maybe a bit too smooth texture. The barrel is solid with the muzzle supplied as a separate piece. When glued together it needs very little sanding smooth and it is more round in section than a lot of other kit barrels out there.

Except for the inside faces of the hatches there is no attempt at any interior detail. One oddity is the commander's hatch area. This kit has a ring surround on top of the cast cupola which the other kits do not have. I have not seen this feature in any photos either, but I left it on the model so you can see what I mean. Is the overhang there between the turret base and the top of the hull? Yes, but not quite as prominent as it could be. Still, it is better than no overhang at all. Overall it captures the look and feel of the T34/85 turret.

All the hull and turret grab rails were unfortunately moulded out of register so they were replaced with items from a 'spare' Tamiya kit. A minor glitch, but annoying for the modeller who does not have a good selection of spare parts, in which case they would have to be fabricated from either plastic or brass rod.

The hull MG bulge needs minor attention - just a bit of filler to blend the bulge into the flat surrounding strip, which, in reality, is part of the same casting. While we are at the front, the join between the upper and lower glacis plates was normally squared-off on later vehicles, but that is not a hard and fast rule. It depends on where and when the hull was fabricated. Use a filler or add plastic strip then file to shape to reproduce this feature.

The real T-34 track was pinned together and the pins tended to come out. The Russians ended up by not actually fastening the pins at the outside edge and just used a 'knocker' plate on the chassis side to bash the pins back in as they came past. It saved some machining time on the pins, hence increasing production rates. Italeri has missed this point, as did Tamiya, but they are simple to add from a piece of thick plastic card - see the kit drawing for location and size. You need to scale up the drawing measurements by 1.6 to get 1:35 scale.

There was a major disaster at the rear of the hull. The upper rear plate (the one with the exhausts on it) is a bit undersized and so does not fit in the back of the hull properly. Also, the rear fenders do not sit down on the chassis cleanly. I did not have time to play around and try to correct this area so I left it alone.

The rest of the hull is up to par with the best, dimensions and angles are excellent and the whole thing sits properly. One small detail is that this hull is a different type to the Tamiya and Maquette kits, and is assembled differently. The other two kits side and top plates have a prominent gap where they are welded together. The Italeri kit does not have this gap, which is still perfectly OK, so do not try and modify it to look like the other two! Also, the radiator outlet cover (part 2c) is shown as flat-sided, and has some very delicate weld seams around the outlet grille. This too is correct, the type was welded up from small pieces of sheet metal. The bottom of the chassis is plain, with the exception of the Zvezda logo. Suspension arms are integral with the side plates.

Plus points are things like the idler axles. They are moveable so fitting after market tracks is easy - build in the track sag by adjusting the idler position as you go. It is best to do this before the upper and lower hull parts are assembled together, there are no sponson bottom plates to get in the way. The external fuel tank assembly is very clever and as a result they make up into very convincing cylinders with only minor cleaning up. The mounts are moulded on and are the correct shape, though a little thick. Careful attention to detail shows on the lower glacis plate, where the hull sides assemble behind the plate neatly.

The instruction sheet is basic, but adequate for the job. Colours are referenced to Italeri Modelmaster paint, which, if you can get it, is pretty good stuff. However, there is a written description for those like me who can't.

The drawing on the rear sheet does not depict the model in the kit, it looks more like a post-war Czech turret to me, and the hull even has the post-war 'call commander' button shroud on the left hand side. Added to that the stowage of the tow cables is a post war layout, and the exhaust covers are Czech pattern also. After saying that, it's a very good drawing!

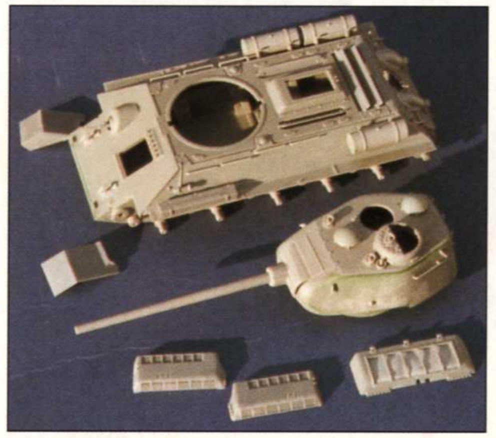
There are two decal options, only one appears on the instruction sheet so I assume the other option is for the T-34/76 kit which is also available from Italeri. I finished off the model as Lieutenant Goncharenko's vehicle, the first into Prague. Basically just plain green with hand painted markings.

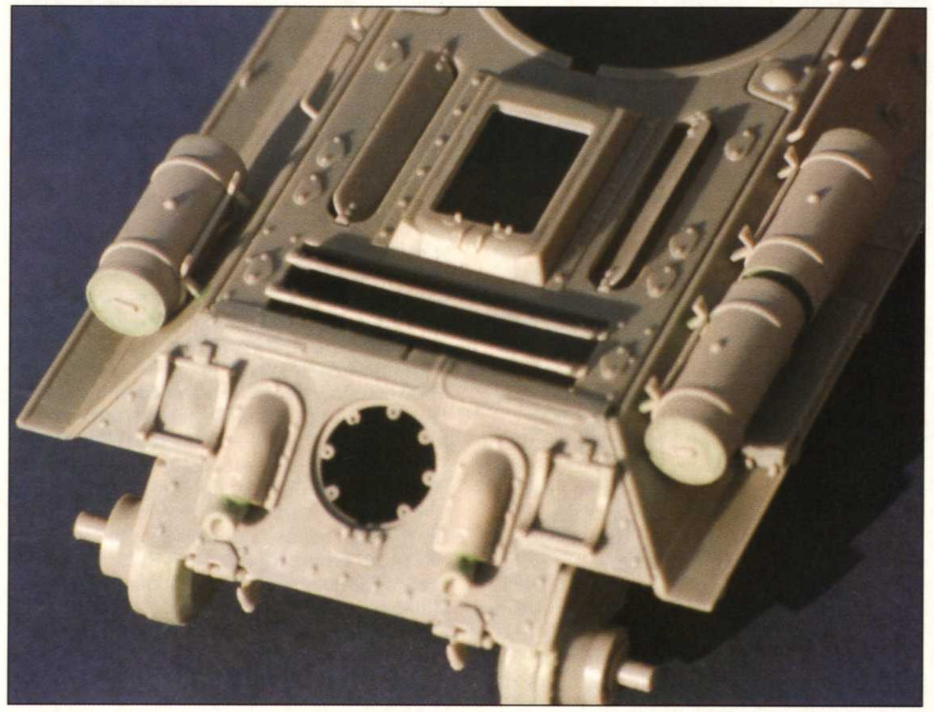
Price-wise this model is aimed fairly and squarely at the youngster/novice. Don't be put off by the price, cheap and cheerful it may be, but with a small amount of work can be made into an excellent replica. The hull is dimensionally correct and the turret is good. I think it represents good value for money and makes a fairly good basis for the avid detailer. With Italeri's aggressive pricing policy you would be crazy to pass this one by. Italeri also market Zvezda's T-34/76 and SU-100 kits. If the T-34/85 is anything to go by, these should be good as well.

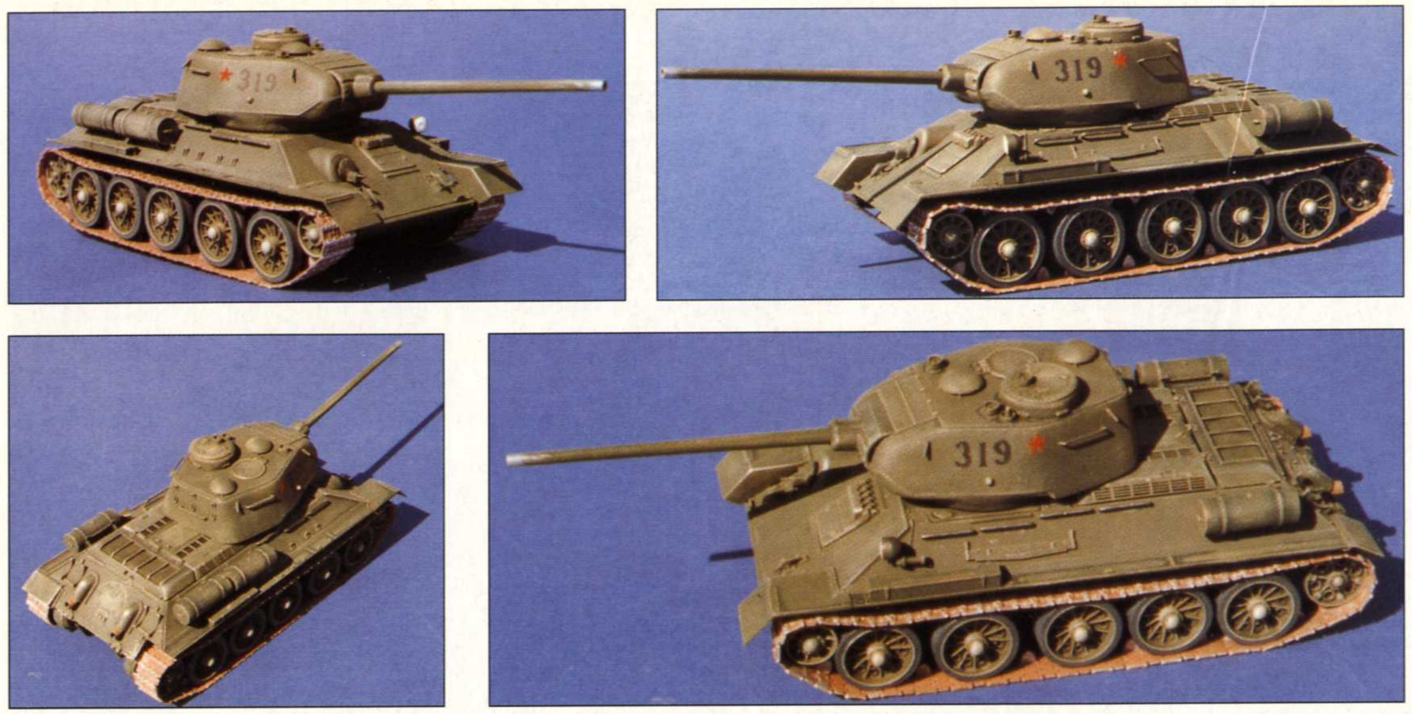
RPM/Maquette (Kit No. 3502)

The kit depicts a late production 'composite' turret and the hull is basically configured for the post war period. This means there are headlamps either side of the glacis plate. For a WWII model just delete the conduit detail on the right hand side. The composite turret is made up from two, welded-together pieces and is the only turret variant to actually have a weld seam round the bottom. When originally brought into the UK this kit was about the same price as the Italeri kit but is now at least 50% more. Quite why I don't know - still the same light grey plastic in the box!

Most of the parts are available separately, the turret, wheel sprue and the individual track links are all available as boxed sets for conversion work. They are extremely cheap too. The tracks are good and will make an excellent replacement for the poor Italeri items, or even Tamiya's. Unfortunately, all the wheels I have seen are badly moulded and have awful sink holes everywhere. I only managed to get one decent set out of three packs! This is a shame as the ones that are not marred are passable. They still suffer from too great a diameter, and here the width across the tread is too great as well. If you like mud on your models this is a candidate for that kind of treatment to hide the wheel blemishes. This would be a real shame though as the individual track links are neat.







RPM/Maquette's model finished as a North Korean vehicle in standard 'Soviet green' with black numbers and a couple of hand-painted red stars. This one has a lot of open hatchways on the engine deck and hull rear plate.

The chassis is made from flat plates similar to Italeri's, but there the comparison ends. There are angled boxes behind the hull sides which contain replicas of the Christie suspension springs, and a bulkhead behind the fighting compartment. Underneath there are all the hatches, lumps and bumps as found on a real T-34. One slight niggle is the sponson bottoms are moulded onto the lower hull sides and as such make it fairly difficult to get the individual track links on, a point that may spoil the kit for younger modellers. For years modellers have been complaining about lack of sponsons but at the end of the day that feature actually made the modelling a lot easier - try getting individual track links onto some of the newer Tamiya and Dragon kits! Not for the faint hearted or the novice to our hobby.

The hull top is very similar to Tamiya's when distances and angles are compared, which makes it inaccurate. However, detail on the hull is extremely good and includes positionable cooling vanes, mesh for the fan outlet, very nice separate covers for the intakes, etc. The intake grilles themselves are separate as well. Even the ends of the fenders are separate. There is a small amount of flash on some of the finer parts, but it comes off easily. Conduits for the lights and the smoke canisters are moulded on, but can easily be scraped off and replaced with rod or wire if you want that little extra sharpness.

There are not very many location pins on the kit and some of those had not moulded properly. This is the same moulding problem as the wheels. Somewhere in production the injection/cooling cycle is wrong and needs to be addressed, a quality control issue really. Also lots of the detail parts are out of register. For example, the end caps for the smoke canisters have moulded-on handles, but they are well off centre. They need a lot of filler and, in the end, I decided not to use them, but still attached the mounting brackets to the rear plate. The cylindrical external fuel tanks also needed a lot of filler round the end caps. Here the mounts are separate again, but like Italeri's, a bit on the thick side.

The engine top access hatch is separate as is the gearbox inspection hatch. Not included in the kit is an engine, however, this is available as an accessory kit complete with gearbox. It is not exactly brilliant, but it is better than nothing and can certainly be 'breathed on', and it's cheap! The location points are already there on the chassis. Look for kit 3506. You can also stuff it into such vehicles as Dragon's Joseph Stalin tanks and SP guns, and Tamiya's KVs and IS III; they all have the same basic engine.

Other goodies in the '85 kit include the smoke canisters, though as I have already mentioned the end cap detail is out of register. Hull side tie down points are moulded as separate items, but are rather thick. Originally, I thought some of the weld seams were a bit crude, but when I went down to the Tank Museum and had a look at the real thing I realised the model is about right. I have seen a lot of T-34s at places like the Budge Collection, but these are mainly post-war production and a lot better made. Soviet wartime production was a bit rough and things were only finished off well where they really needed to be.

For tow cables Maquette supply a piece of nylon string with separate plastic end fittings. Another nice touch. There are sink marks on the turret top so expect to set aside an evening just for filling and cleaning up. The turret joint is a bit loose so I used a gap filling super glue to assemble the top and bottom. After spraying with accelerator it was a few minutes work to clean up the welds and gaps. The turret shape is very good, but the goose neck at the bottom is too thin. Add strips of thin plastic card until you are happy with the profile then smooth in with filler. Re-texturing of the turret was necessary, mainly because there is a funny little area about 1 mm deep at the very top of the turret which is devoid of any texturing at all.

The periscopes are separate items and can be positioned rotated, another nice touch. The gun barrel is the usual two-piece, split type, which needs sanding down to get rid of the seam. Internally there is a rudimentary breech for the gun, with parts marred by slight sink holes. It's better than nothing and can form the basis of an interior. The rear of the turret features separate tie down points which are a bit thick, but at least they were supplied in the first place.

The turret is a late production composite model, characterised by the 'fore and aft' ventilator domes. The earlier versions had the same layout as the Tamiya and Italeri kits. The late angle-jointed turrets also had the 'fore and aft' layout so there is a little scope for cross-kitting here. The turret is available as a separate kit and it fits the Tamiya and Italeri hulls with no adjustments at all. They all have the same turret ring diameter. This means that all the resin after market turrets designed for the Tamiya kit will fit this model as well.

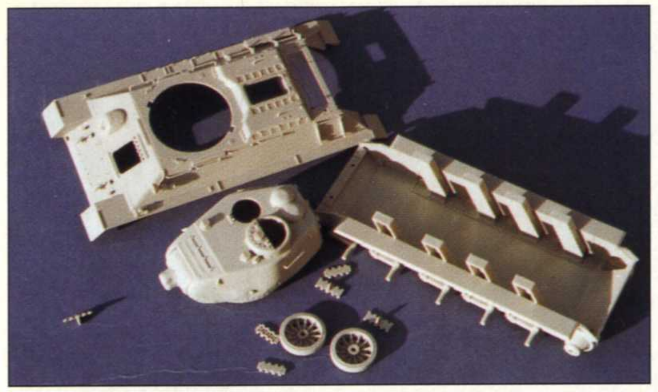
This type of turret was used in Korea and the Middle East wars and there are plenty of photos of them 'brewed up'. RPM/Maquette's kit would be the ideal place to start, with the addition of the engine set. In that case some extra detailing would be necessary, but things like open hatches, missing fenders, etc., would not be a problem as all of them are separate pieces anyway.

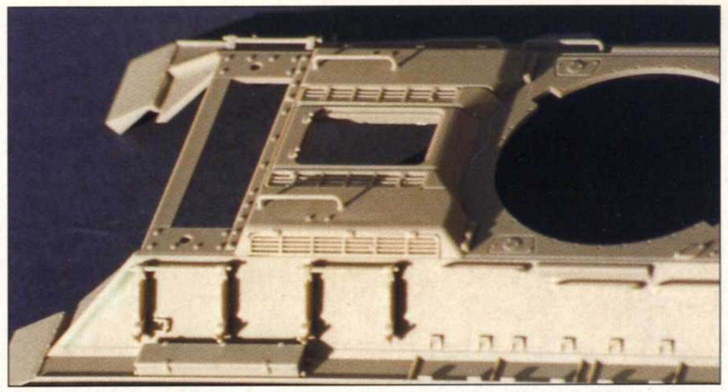
The instruction sheet is simple and has a great narrative on the front. There are two build options, both clearly called out, but only one set of decals. There isn't a parts layout and there were some items left over when the kit was finished, what for I don't know!

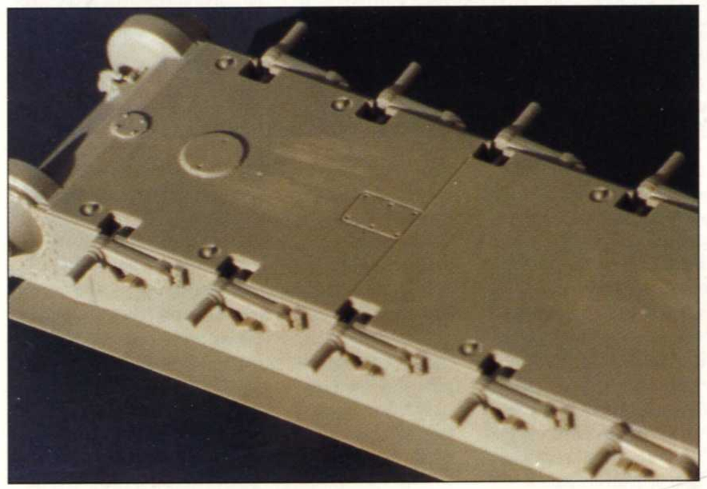
There are snags with the kit. You will need to tidy up the lower glacis plate/side plate joint somewhat. Maquette made the sides overlap the front, which is the wrong way round! Italeri got it right with their chassis. Fit of a lot of parts is only so-so and some of them are decidedly clunky. You will need a fair amount of filler on this kit and you will also have to invest a lot more time and effort than either of the Tamiya and Italeri kits require.

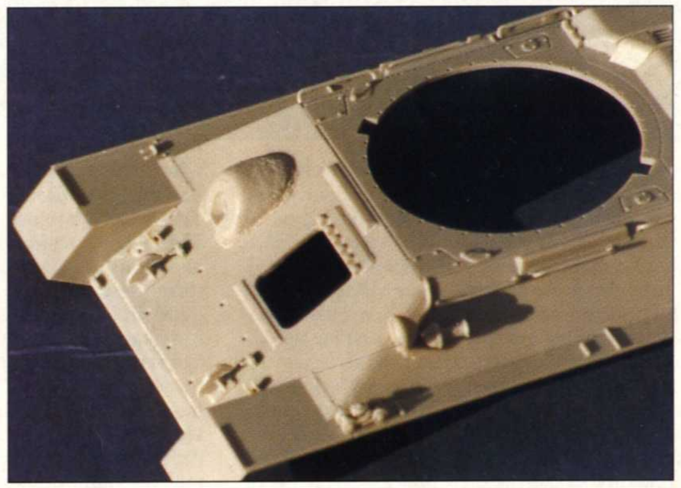
I finished the model as North Korean. This is just standard Soviet green with a few black numbers added as well as a couple of hand-painted red stars.

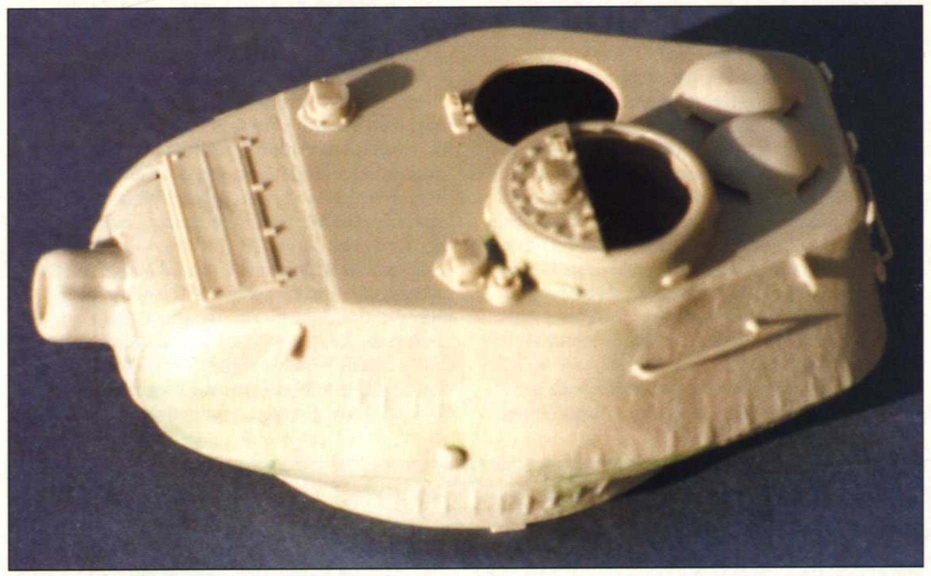
Given the reservations about the wheels this is a pretty good kit and looks convincing. Because of the wheels, value for money is only fair, whereas better moulding would have made it a bargain! The redeeming features are the very different turret, separate access hatches on the hull and the separate track links - you could pay more than the kit is worth just to get better track links. The whole idea is good, but it's just not executed that well. However, I think this particular company will be one to watch out for in the future.











Dragon (Kit No. 6606)

This is an all-new kit and it's modern mould making at its best. Since their early kits of the T-72 and the BMP, Dragon have really learnt how to do it with plastic. The rate they can turn out new subjects is just phenomenal. They have also learnt how to maximise their moulds, just look at the way they covered practically every Sherman variant in such a very short time. The T-34 will be the same, the NVA model is now out, complete with 'starfish' pattern wheels similar to T-54/55/62.

What about the kit? Good artwork on the box depicts a T34/85 rolling into Berlin, victorious soldiers sat on the turret, one waving the Red Banner. Behind is another one with welded-on bed frames as stand-off armour - a nice little conversion perhaps? The kit is sold as a 1944 model, but it is more like an early 1945 production model. It is fitted with practically the same pattern turret as the one from Tamiya. On opening the box there is the now usual Dragon 'value for money' in that the box is full to the top. The light grey plastic sprues are all neatly bagged and everything looks fine until you open the bags.

Now you are just about to say 'Here he goes slagging off Dragon again' but I'm just trying to build a little tension into the article! When you open the bags, what looked fine before, now looks the best you have ever seen. What you get is just A1, superb, brilliant, everything we have been waiting for! I mean it, this is a really terrific kit. It's so good I really don't know where to start.

Of course it isn't 100% perfect, but all angles are correct as well as 99.99% of the measurements. The wheels are exactly to the measurements I took at the tank museum, and I mean exactly. Detail is right down to the tyre size lettering on the side wall, and even that is in scale. In fact, it is so small I nearly didn't see it. The only thing that may be wrong is the mould marks on the tyres, which should be raised not sunken. Even here I stand to be corrected, but all T-34s I have seen have raised lines.

The tracks are individual links, blemish and flash free. My personal viewpoint is that these tracks are better than the Modelkasten individual links. An arguable point, but they have a finesse that the Modelkasten ones just do not have. The sprue is marked up as 'T34/85' so at a guess other variants which Dragon have planned, such as the '76 gun versions, will have the relevant pattern track. They have a definite edge over the Maquette ones so let's hope they will be sold separately.

While we are on the sprue designations the hull and gun are on the same sprue, marked up T34/85 A/B, whereas the turret sprue is T34/85 A only (as are the wheel sprues). All other sprues are marked T-34 and are common parts that will do for any variants. The Dragon Sherman kits were inherited in part from Italeri so there were always plenty of spares in the box, but here they have really done their homework and sat down and thought how to maximise their efforts. At the beginning I said the box was full, but here everything is relevant to this particular kit, so no parts for the spares box!

The instruction sheet is well drawn and easy to follow. There is one vehicle depicted in the marking section, plus another four on a separate sheet. Colours are referenced to Gunze Sangyo and Italeri paints, along with a written description.

The hull top is where my measurements agree totally with the kit. I think the hull top is absolutely spot on and the angles are exact. The surface has a very fine texture, detail is crisp and weld seams are neat and not overstated. Engraved lines are very thin and the whole piece oozes quality. There was a slight sink mark at the rear right hand side, but it was minor and took seconds to fix. The machine-gun mantlet is an individual piece and has superb, cast texture to it. The main access hatch on the engine deck is separate as

is the round access plate on the rear hull. For some reason this plate is devoid of the fixing bolts around the edge. Did Dragon forget to put them on? If the truth was told, that's all that I could find wrong with the kit, full stop! I believe my kit must have been a pre-production item as a second kit (received after I had assembled and painted the one for the article) actually had the bolt heads, so full marks to Dragon for rapidly re-working the mould! Are Dragon going to do an engine set a la RPM/Maquette? Or are the Russian company going to sell even more of their little accessory set? I was surprised the fan outlet cover (part B15) did not come with an etched steel or nylon mesh insert, but the moulded mesh is perfectly acceptable.

The chassis is similar in concept to RPM/Maquette's in that there are spring boxes for the suspension, separate swing arms and a fully detailed underside. Some of the hatches are separate here as well. Bump stops are moulded onto the chassis Track pin 'knocker' plates have to be glued on, but the locations aren't good (read non-existent!) The lower front glacis is a separate piece as is the nose angle strip. Weld seams on these two pieces are just lovely. The idler axles are adjustable so getting the track to fit should not be a problem.

The turret is similar in type to Tamiya's, but is much better. It is longer by about 2mm which really improves the way it sits on the hull top. For once the nose of the turret has the correct contours. Also it has the correct overhang at the front and sides, the only one of all four kits here. Cast texture on the main turret is understated, the rolled top plate quite different in appearance from the casting. The two oblong panels at the front of the turret cheeks are individual parts, no joint through the middle. The periscopes are moulded-on, but the surrounds and tops are individual. Very neat! Individual parts for the tie downs at the back of the turret, separate ventilator domes, super mantlet, excellent cupola, great weld seams, where do I stop? By the way, this turret will not fit any of the other kits without some modifications as the turret ring is a fair bit wider.

Some other little surprises: absolutely no pin marks on the track links. The intermediate links (the ones without guide horns) have two small holes in them as per the originals. Then there are some very thin plastic straps for snow cleat stowage on the fender. The face of the horn is hollowed out, a little touch that really sets this kit apart from most of the 'run-of-the-mill' stuff out there in the shops. Did I mention the clear plastic headlamp lens?

Because of the level of detail there isn't really much to do to super-detail the kit. Perhaps the modeller could scrape off the ice cleat stowage points and make them up from thin wire, maybe add proper handles to the external fuel drums and finally put some mesh in the rear grilles, but that's about it.

One thing I noticed was there is the conduit for the smoke drums moulded on the rear plate but Dragon do not supply the drums themselves. Was this an over sight?

The finish I selected was plain green with hand painted white bars and numbers to represent a T-34 during the Berlin fighting.

If there is anything seriously wrong with this kit I would have to be the world's worst nit-picker to find it, because it all looks good to me! Put it next to the others on a table and crouch down so that they are at eye level (only fighter bomber pilots actually see tanks from the top!) The Dragon kit stands out a mile. If they have done this well with the T-34, how would they fare with a decent T-54/55? Or even, (I wish) a decent T-62?

The bottom line

None of these kits have a crew figure, but there are plenty out there available in plastic, resin and white metal. A typical fitting not seen on these kits (Dragon the exception) is the rain cover above each periscope on the turret roof. They can be easily made with plastic sheet and strip.

Ease of building. Tamiya show how it's done with clean mouldings and simple assembly. Italeri was marginally behind Tamiya in the ease of build stakes, a very simple kit. Maquette needs a lot of cleaning up and general fiddling and there are twice as many pieces as either of the other two. Dragon's kit also has a lot of pieces, but the fit of parts is up to the very latest standards.

How the dimensions scale out (and what the kits do with them!)

Where the biggest difference comes in is on the upper hull width, where both Tamiya and Maquette are narrow, mainly in part to the side plates laying at the wrong angle. This has a knock-on effect as the base of the turret then becomes too narrow as well. Use either of the Tamiya or Maquette turrets on the Italeri hull and they start to look pin-headed. They aren't that good on their own hulls either! Dragon and Italeri are both spot on with dimensions and angles, so overall their hulls look OK.

Next let's look at the wheels. The diameter of the tyre is 820mm. This scales out to 23.43mm. Taking a dial gauge calliper I had a quick measure of all the kit wheels. Only Dragon got them right. The rest are all too big!

Dragon's T-34/85 finished in plain green with hand-painted white bars and numbers to represent a T-34 during the Berlin fighting. Dragon's moulded parts are top quality.

Italeri's are too great in diameter and that look is made more prominent because the tyre tread is narrow as well. Maquette's tyre tread is too wide! Tamiya's are almost the correct width. They are also the best moulded of the three. This is noticeable on the idler and drive wheels, which are very neat. The other two are clunky by comparison. Dragon's wheels have to be judged apart from the rest. They are quite simply in a different league! Diameter and tread are spot on, not even a couple of decimal places wrong. Idlers and sprockets tell the same story.

Dragon and Italeri romp home here, basically because they got the dimensions and angles right. It doesn't mean the others are bad, they just don't look as good. Dragon's wheels are the only accurate items and combined with the excellent turret and hull this kit 'sits' better than the rest.

All these kits are devoid of things like casting numbers on the turret rear. Airwaves produce a neat little etched brass set for the T-34 which has lovely Cyrillic style numbers in it, otherwise try Slater's plastic letter sets or there are etched brass ones available from Kendall Model Company. The KMC items (available from Armour Accessories, Units 15/16 Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow, Inverclyde, Scotland PA14 5DG) are more in scale and style for tanks such as the Sherman.

Conclusions:

All these kits can make up into reasonable models straight from the box. The Italeri kit can be improved by adding new tracks, the RPM kit with new wheels. The Tamiya kit needs new wheels and some detail attention.

The Dragon kit can be built straight from the box, no messing, no extras. When Dragon's other planned T-34s appear, modellers will be able to cross-kit and modify them to their hearts' content. If you are in the market for a T34/85, think long and hard before you purchase one, but I bet I know which one you'll buy once you see what's in Dragon's box!

Highlights

The surprises for me were the Italeri kit and the RPM tracks. Both at the cheaper end of the market they are really excellent value for money. In the case of Italeri you get accuracy as well. It is a good basis to work from if you can not run to the cost of the Dragon kit.

On an out-of-ten rating basis, Tamiya get 6, Italeri 7, Maquette 6, Dragon get 9.5. Why give Dragon only 9.5 not 10? I'm just building a little slack into the rating system for when they improve even more. Well, if this is the start of a new series, imagine how good they will be at the end!

Add-ons.

VB Decals (Woodway, Clarendon Road, Alderbury, Salisbury SP5 3AT). Many readers will remember Vasko Barbic's articles in MM a decade ago. Well, he has produced a great Egyptian T-34/85 decal sheet. It is very accurate (I've seen his slide show!) and covers five individual vehicles, down to side views and colour notes.

Stencillit (PO Box 1411, Glasgow, Scotland,G46 7DF). This range of brass stencils has two good sets applicable for the T-34. The first is the Soviet WWII sheet (1004), the second is the Eastern Front sheet (1018), which has markings for countries such as Slovakia. Included is the Finnish Hakaristi cross, a sort of cut-down swastika. It is a two-part stencil but there are clear line up marks so it is easy to use. Finnish T-34/85s run in the Ps-245 range. There were 12 on the active list in 1945. Stencillit prices are £7.50 a set, which is pretty good considering they can be used over and over again.

Chesapeake Model Designs: Czechoslovak production turret and fittings. Really neat two-piece resin turret, complete with hatches, gun barrel, different exhaust covers and a set of decals, courtesy of Vasko Barbic. It is designed for the Tamiya kit, which means it will fit the Maquette and Italeri hulls as well. Typical of CMD products, no air bubbles, warpage or defects to speak of, only clean, accurate castings. CMD also make a good set of spider web pattern wheels.

Accurate Armour (Units 15/16 Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow, Inverclyde, Scotland PA14 5DG). AA make two spider web pattern wheel sets. Both are easy to use. In their TRAXPAX range are five sets of different pattern tracks, from very early to post war.

Airwaves (E.D. Models 64 Stratford Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 3LP). This is ED Models own range of etched brass add-ons. The set is very simple and easy to use. There's no point in buying an etched set then finding that half the pieces can't be used by the average modeller. This set has the obvious stuff, and it is enough to sharpen up any of these kits with little effort. There are even Cyrillic style numbers to add to the turret casting, a nice touch.

On the Mark (PO Box 663, Lousville, CO 80027 USA). Designed for the Tamiya kit this set is a few years old but as it was well-designed in the first place it does not look dated at all. It is more complicated than the Airwaves set and will need a more than average modeller to finish it. There are parts for the complete radiator outlet grille and they are difficult to assemble successfully. Still a good buy.

Jordi Rubio: How about a nice turned aluminium gun barrel? Mr Rubio has just what you need. I believe it was designed for the Tamiya kit, but it should fit any of these kits with only a little work. (LSA Models, 151 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3HD stock the Jordi Rubio range).

References

T34/KV. Model Art Co. (Japanese text).
T-34-85 Medium Tank 1944-1994.
Zaloga/Kinnear/Sarson. New Vanguard 20, Osprey Publishing. ISBN 1-85532-535-7.
Soviet Tanks and Combat Vehicles of WWII.
Zaloga/Grandsen. Arms & Armour Press. ISBN 0-85368-606-8.
T-34 in Action. Zaloga/Grandsen. Squadron/Signal. ISBN 0-89747-1121-1.
'The Tank Museum, Bovington'. Books are OK, but there's no substitute for the real thing!

	Real Dimension	Real/35	Italeri	Maquette	Tamiya	Dragon
Tyre Diameter	820mm	23.43mm	23.7mm	23.7mm	23.75mm	23.4mm
Road Wheel Diameter	700mm	20mm	19.7mm	20mm	20mm	20mm
Tyre Tread	125mm	3.6mm	3mm	4.1mm	3.5mm	3.6mm
Idler Diameter	490mm	14mm	14.2mm	14.2mm	14.3mm	14mm
Drive Wheel Diameter	630mm	18mm	18.5mm	17.8mm	18mm	18mm
Hull Top Width	1850mm	52.8mm	53.8mm	53.2mm	53.6mm	52.8mm
Hull Top Length	3650mm	104.2mm	103mm	105.5mm	105.3mm	104.2mm
Side Plate Angle	40°	40°	40°	45°	45°	40°

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are given to the following for their generous help and assistance: Vasko Barbic, Steve Zaloga, Mike McLaughlin, Andrew Deely and Derek Hansen.

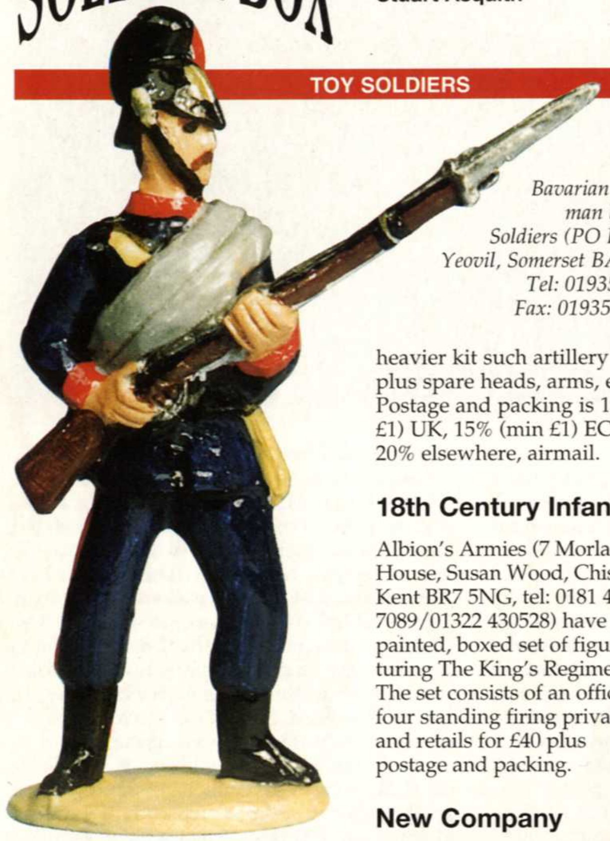
Feedback

I welcome all feedback, good or bad. I can be contacted at DCROSBY770@AOL.COM if you are on line. ■

SOLDIER BOX

For collectors of toy soldiers with Stuart Asquith

TOY SOLDIERS



LEFT: A Bavarian infantryman by Dorset Soldiers (PO Box 2112, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7YD. Tel: 01935 851550. Fax: 01935 850234).

ABOVE; A Coldstream Guardsman standing at ease, plus a marching Greek Evzone, two recent additions to the Soldier Pac list of castings. LEFT: A private of The King's Regiment 1748, as modelled by Albion's Armies.

Soldier Pac Latest

Soldier Pac (2 Holland Drive, Muxton, Telford, Shropshire TF2 8RA, tel: 01952 676822) continue to add to their range of castings. Included amongst the latest releases are a Russian Cossack (Catalogue reference M36), a marching Greek Evzone (F216) and a Coldstream Guardsman standing at ease (F220). By my latest list, there are no less than 241 foot figures in the Soldier Pac list at £1.50, plus 36 mounted at £4 each and many items of heavier kit such artillery pieces, plus spare heads, arms, etc. Postage and packing is 10% (min £1) UK, 15% (min £1) EC and 20% elsewhere, airmail.

18th Century Infantry

Albion's Armies (7 Morland House, Susan Wood, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5NG, tel: 0181 468 7089/01322 430528) have issued a painted, boxed set of figures featuring The King's Regiment 1748. The set consists of an officer and four standing firing privates and retails for £40 plus postage and packing.

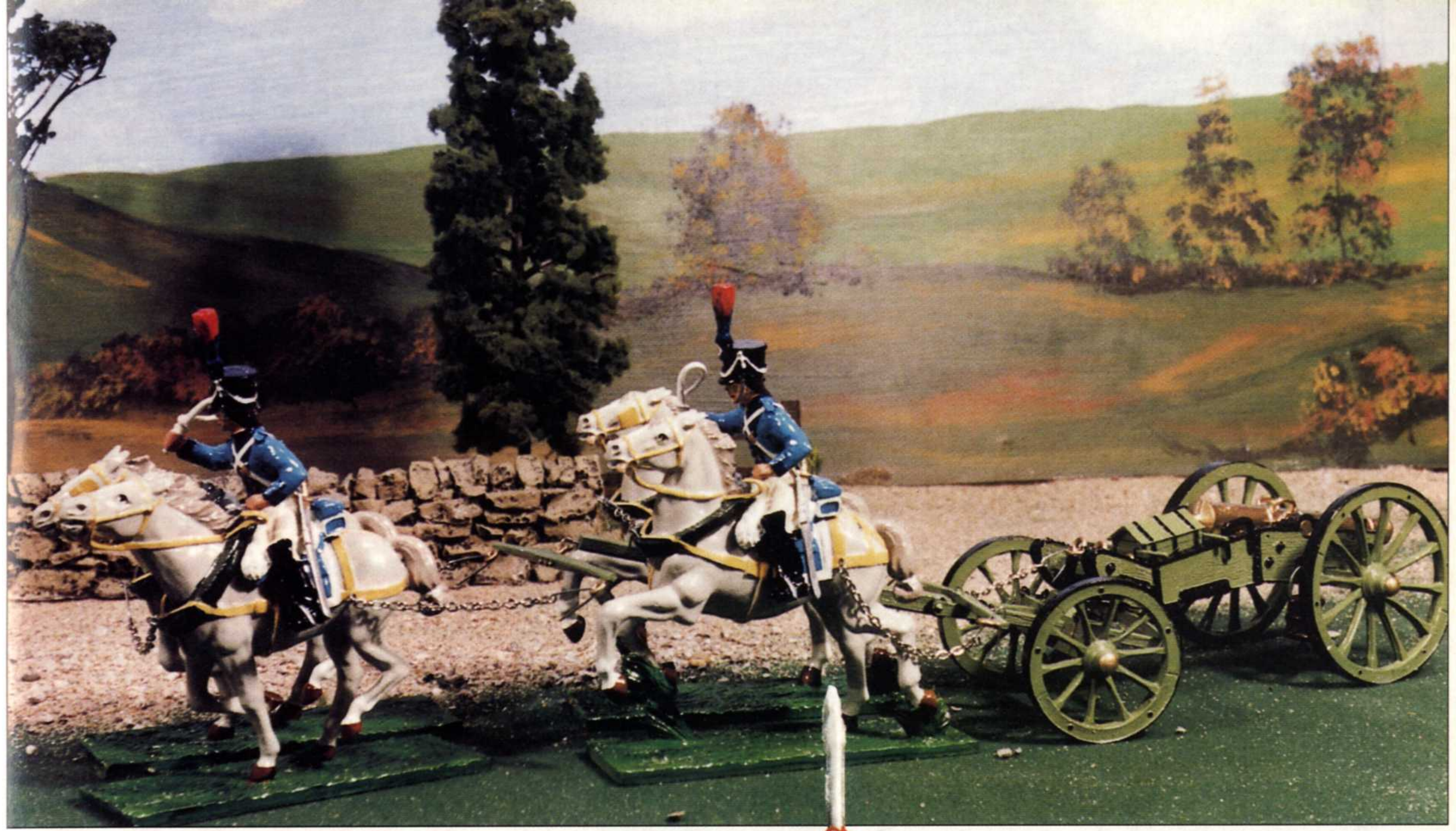
New Company

Second to None Models (93 Kensington Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2SZ, tel: 0118 9391327) are a new company making limited edition collector's figures in the old toy soldier style. Their first, very promising, release features the 2nd Battalion, The Border Regiment on patrol in Waziristan 1894. Kitted out in warm and comfortable clothing, the figures have been deliberately posed in a relaxed style in an attempt to convey the feeling of weariness and fatigue experienced on long patrols in regions that were both mountainous and hostile. This attractive and unusual set features an officer and four men in a strictly limited edition of 50 sets, and costs £39.95 plus 10% UK postage and packing, 20% elsewhere.

New ACW Range

Frontline Figures (1 Holmsdale Close, Westcliff on Sea, Essex SS0 0QW, tel: 01702 347619) have started a range of American Civil War 1861-1865 figures. One of the sets in this range is a pair of figures from the Confederate 1st Texas Regiment (Ref ACC2 £37.95) featuring an infantryman plus a sergeant carrying the Texas 'Lone Star' flag.

Members of the 2nd Battalion, The Border Regiment on patrol in Waziristan 1894, from new company - Second to None Models.



ABOVE: A French Napoleonic line, four-horse artillery team, complete with an 8 pdr cannon and limber (Ref EQ68) from Trophy Miniatures Wales Ltd (Unit 4, Vale Enterprise Centre, Hayes Road, Sully, Penarth, South Glamorgan CF64 5SY. Tel: 01446 721011).

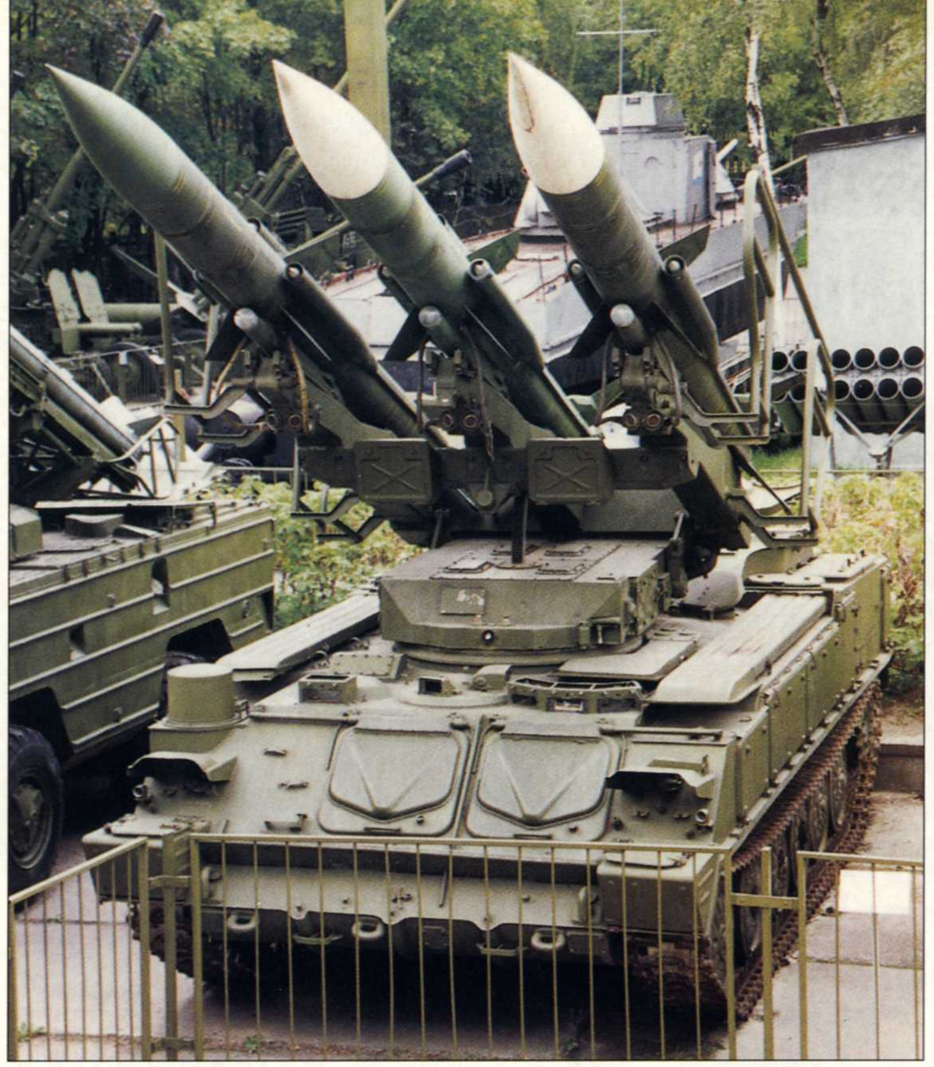
A Confederate infantryman plus a sergeant carrying the Texas 'Lone Star' flag from the new ACW range by Frontline Figures.

Plastic Warrior

Plastic Warrior is a magazine for the collector of old and new plastic figures. No 67 features A Decade of Deetail - Waterloo; The Battle of Metauro; Fighting Fantasy Figures; Beyond the Limits; Airfix Modern British Infantry, etc. Details from *Plastic Warrior*, 65 Walton Court, Woking, Surrey GU21 5EE. ■

VOTES FOR WOMEN

ABOVE: The Russian Cossack from Soldier Pac, a one piece (man plus horse) casting, painted here by your columnist (who also managed to break the tip off the figure's rifle!). LEFT: Two recent sets in the 'Town & Country' series from Trophy Miniatures Wales Ltd (Unit 4, Vale Enterprise Centre, Hayes Road, Sully, Penarth, South Glamorgan, Wales CF64 5SY. Tel: 01446 721011). Entitled 'Daydreaming in the Park' set C89 features two very different figures - a suffragette and a Chelsea Pensioner - sat on a park bench. 'The Proud Mother' (C112) depicts a proud Mum showing her latest offspring to a rather dodgy looking Scottish character.



'Gainful' on display in a Moscow museum. Photo: Fraser Gray.

A Gainful Occupation

Robin Buckland builds Cromwell Models 1:35 scale conversion kit for the SA-6 Gainful self propelled missile launcher vehicle

When I a conversion kit to produce a 1:35 scale model of the Soviet SA-6 'Gainful' was to be released I have to admit that I really wanted to have a go at it. SA-6 was known as 'Gainful' to the West and ZRK-SD Kub (Cube), to the Soviets. This is an all-resin conversion based on the chassis of Dragon models' ZSU-23-4V1 Shilka. All you take from the Dragon kit is the lower hull and running gear and add the Cromwell Models conversion for the superstructure.

SA-6 Gainful

Originally designed in the early 1960s, there were delays in "Gainful's" development until some first appeared in Moscow parades in 1967, but it was not deployed in significant numbers until about 1970 when it served in the Air Defence Regiments of both Tank and Motor Rifle divisions. Each regiment consists of five batteries, each with four launch vehicles and one SSNR engagement radar 'Straight Flush'. These are coupled with regimental-level radars, a 'Thin Skin' height finding radar and two 'Long Track', long range acquisition vehicles. Added to this are two re-load vehicles per battery, plus more at Regimental level. The battery is commanded from the 'Straight Flush' radar vehicle, the data link to the firing units being the small tub on the front right corner of the 'Gainful'.

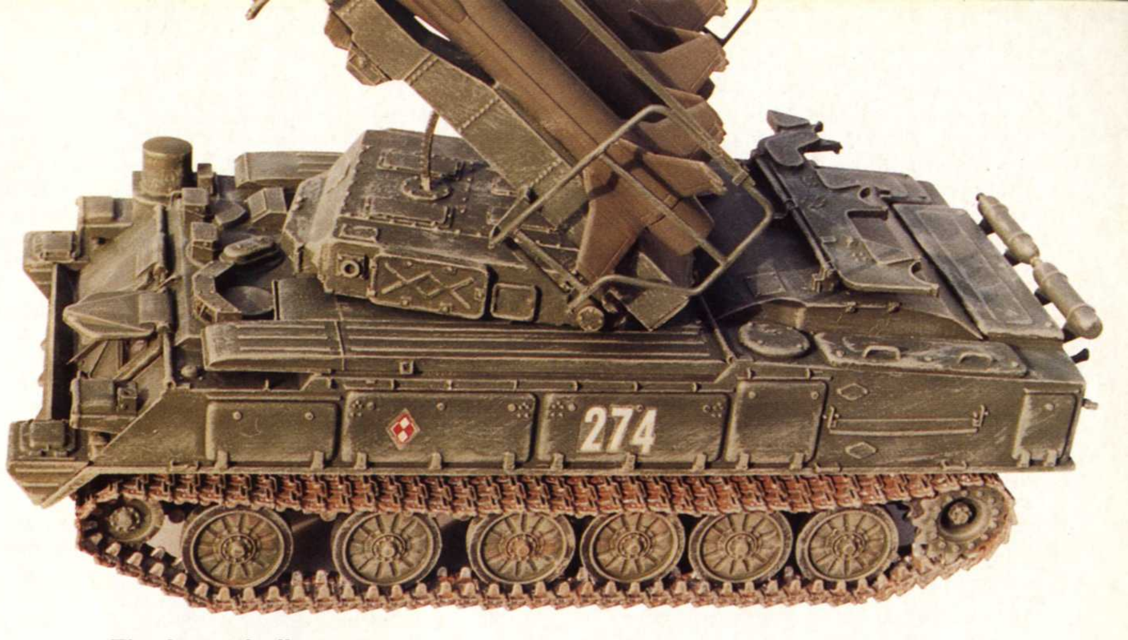
The Soviets designed a system of interlocking types of air defence, for low, medium and high level threats which the SA-6 fitted into and it is interesting for being an unusual design if you compare it to some of its Western counterparts. Mainly, perhaps because it utilises a solid fuel booster and then a ram jet to propel it, rather than liquid fuels. This means it is simple to maintain (a plus point for crews who therefore need less specialist training). However, I gather that solid fuel means the missile loses efficiency at higher altitudes and some flexibility in its flight profile. The pluses must have outweighed the negatives from the Soviet point of view, and 'Gainful' fitted in with their 'low-medium-high' doctrine. In the West we still seem to want to make all things 'multi-role' and perhaps lose some of the speciality in the process.

In 1973 the 'Gainful' was used to good effect by the Egyptians in combat against Israel. The lessons were well learnt, however, and by 1982 in the Lebanon it was rendered ineffective by Israeli countermeasures. Whether this is because the export models were less capable than the (then) Soviet army ones is not clear, but it is now being replaced by newer systems in the Russian armed forces.

The model - upper hull

The upper hull is a one-piece moulding which is an excellent example of just how good a job Cromwell can do on a one-piece polyurethane resin casting. The underside is well strengthened to stop the part warping and the detail is beautifully sharp and crisp. Of particular note are the tiny rings moulded down both sides, all cast integrally, and still with neat holes in their centres. Cromwell somehow manage to achieve some castings that many others I suspect would not even attempt.

There was a minimum of cleaning up, mainly underneath where the moulding points have to be trimmed. Add some separate parts such as hatches, the missile travel locks plus a couple of other bits and there you are. The two front hatches are supplied in separate parts and you could fix them open, but to do this would invite some interior detail for the driver's compartment, which I didn't have so the simple solution was to keep them shut.



The lower hull

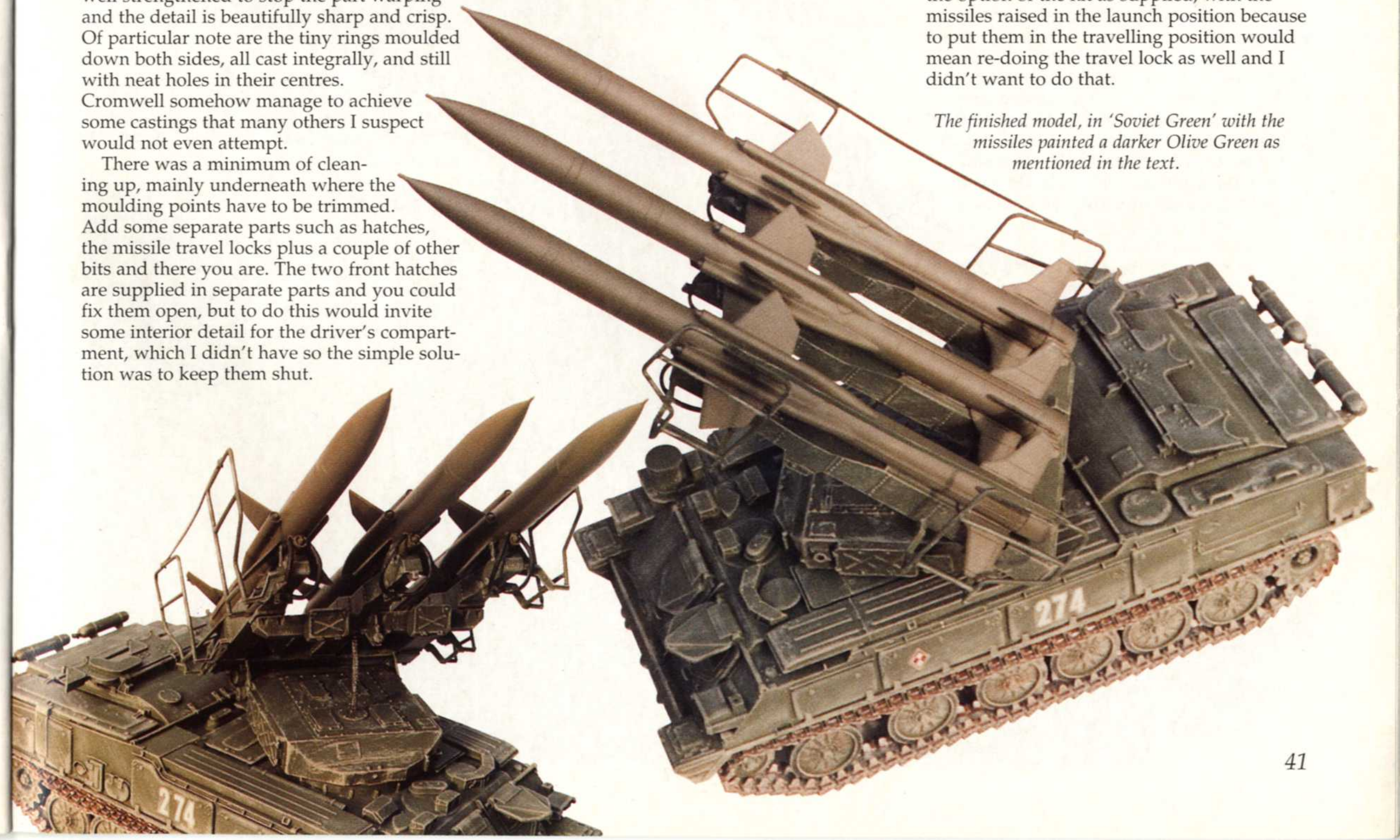
One spot causing a little confusion is on the lower hull where the instruction sheet leaves you to do a little bit of guesswork. It's obvious once you know, but not as clear as it could have been. There is a diagram of the lower hull with the simple notation - 'cut here', but nothing more. Looking through the parts you will find a good sized resin piece whose use doesn't immediately come to mind. This is a plug to extend the chassis and all it needed was an exploded diagram to show the part to be inserted. It also highlights how much easier some manufacturers make it for modellers by providing illustrated parts diagrams. Despite producing some of the finest resin cast kits available I'm afraid Cromwell still haven't got the best instructions to go with them.

The front panel also has to be cut out and a resin replacement put in place. Again it wasn't clear exactly where to 'draw the line' around this, so do the minimum and try a dry fit, then remove other bits as you go, continually dry-fitting as you go. Eventually, I got it about right, and a bit of filler was needed in a couple of places where I had gone too far.

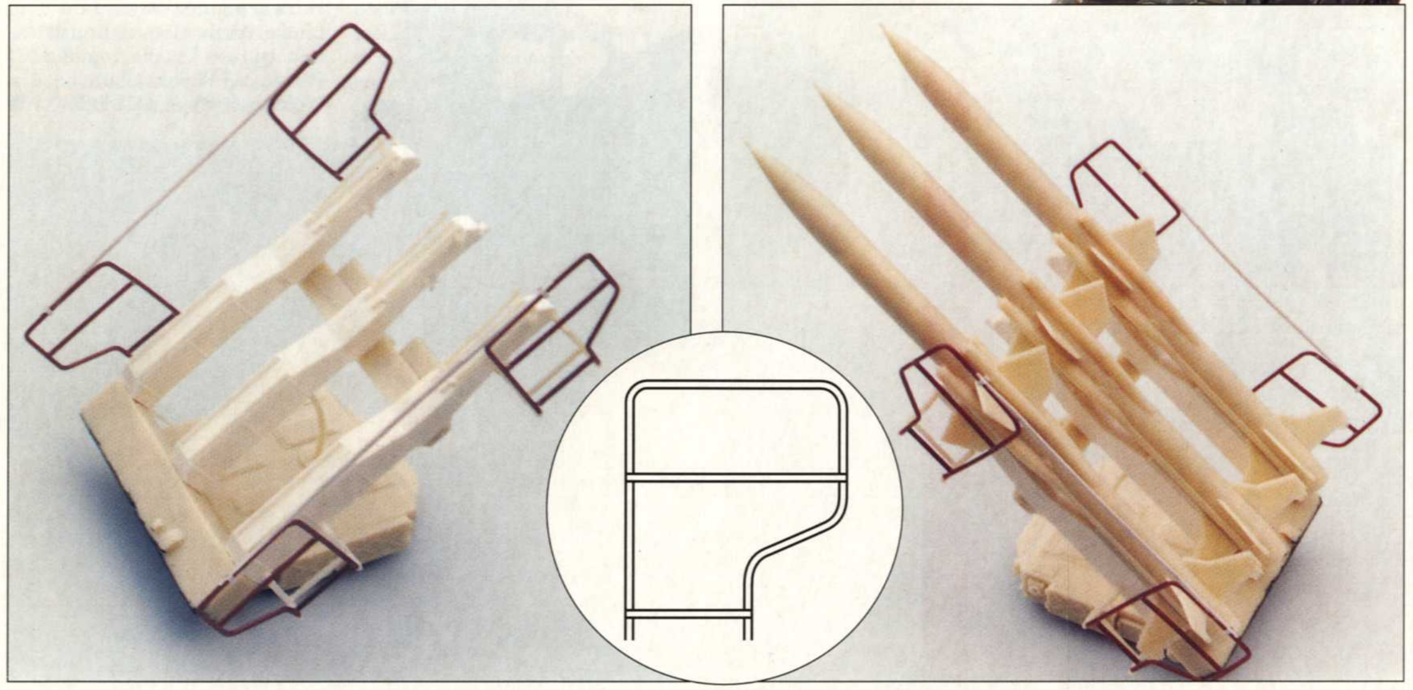
Having sawn the Dragon kit part in two the extension plug fitted quite well. A little bit of fine adjustments with a craft knife to thin down the plastic edges, then some filler to finish off and be smoothed down. I found the lower hull then to be a good fit with the upper hull. The kit wheels and tracks were then fitted.

Launch unit

The turntable mounting the launch rails and the missiles themselves is quite straightforward. Remove some moulding plugs and then the assembly is simple enough. Do take care to get the three launch rails in the right place; they are individuals for left, right and centre. The centre one is made plain, but 'yours truly' got careless and got the outer two the wrong way round and had to correct it later. Not drastic, just plain silly, and a lesson that we all make mistakes! I chose to take the option of the kit as supplied, with the missiles raised in the launch position because to put them in the travelling position would mean re-doing the travel lock as well and I didn't want to do that.



The finished model, in 'Soviet Green' with the missiles painted a darker Olive Green as mentioned in the text.



ABOVE LEFT: The launcher unit with guide rails added. ABOVE RIGHT: Launcher unit with missiles in place. INSET: Full size template for the launcher guard rails.

There is the one area where the kit is lacking. There are large and prominent guard rails on both sides of the launcher and they are not provided as part of the model, and neither are templates provided for the modeller to make some. The support arms are there (more on them in just a moment), but no rails. I gather that for ease of production the rails were left off, as they sometimes are on the real thing. However, in many of my photo references they are in place. I can understand if they are awkward to cast satisfactorily, I don't have a problem with that, especially if it would add more to the price of the kit. However, I would have liked to have seen a 1:35 scale template for the modeller from which to make their own. Disappointing, but not the end of the world if you have some references (which everyone hasn't!) and a little bit of modelling experience, but it just isn't as good as I think it might be. I have spoken to Gordon Brown and he has commented that he'll see what he can do to include a drawing to work from. Meanwhile, my own working drawing is included here.

If you look at the 1:76 scale drawings by Steve Zaloga in Soviet Combat Vehicles 1945 to the Present (Arms and Armour Press) there are different pattern supports for front and rear. If you look at photos on the previous page in the same book and in other photos elsewhere, they are often a mirror fitting of the same pattern rail at both front and back. So, having measured and scaled up the drawing which, thankfully, matched the span on the rail supports as provided in the kit, I opted for the easy way out, and did four of the same pattern rail, using plastic rod and a plastic card rail between them. I'm not sure if they are perfect, but they look OK for me.

There are four rail supports in two separate sizes. The main launch rail is wider at the back than the front and the spacers on the rail supports are, therefore, shorter for the back pair and longer for the front pair. This keeps the side rails in line and, of course, clear of the fins on the missiles themselves. Don't mix them up, I nearly did.

Missiles

The load of three missiles is neatly done. Each comprises 11 parts, the four forward and four rear fins, then the rear exhaust nozzle, nose cone, and the main body. Clean up and assembly is very straightforward and presented no problems. Just one of the bodies had a small line from the mould, but this was easily dealt with, and it wasn't even there on the other two. When you have mounted them to the launch rails fit the twin pipes that go from the missile to the launch rail it sits on. These take a little fine adjustment in length with a craft knife to get the right sit of the things, but go very carefully and don't remove too much.

Finishing

The SA-6 system has been in use with a good number of countries, some being knocked out and captured during the Gulf War, as was the SA-8 Gecko now to be found at Duxford. I haven't yet found one here to see in the UK (if anyone knows of one which we can get to see I'd be grateful if you'd let me know where), so, I decided to leave it in the simple scheme of Russian Green. What colour is that? Well, I don't choose to get too involved in the arguments about shades of paint where different batches from different manufacturers over the years and the effects of weathering to me means there is nothing to be pedantic about.

If you are referring to colour photos, what about all the differences possible via the photo processing? Colour is a complete minefield, with no one proper answer unless you can get a paint chip off the actual vehicle you are modelling, but even then it doesn't necessarily hold good for another bit of equipment. I, therefore, stick with an old saying, "if it looks right, it probably is".

On this occasion I chose to use a new paint, for me, one of the Revell paint shades that I found in a little local model shop - their Matt Green 65. It is quite a dark green which compared well with some (I stress the word 'some') colour photos of the 'Gainful' in both Russian and Polish service. It is nice and easy in that you just paint everything green and then pick out the smaller details such as tools, the exhaust grille and so on, plus the black rubber pipes leading from the missiles to their launch rails.

Most of us have our own preferred way of finishing trackwork. Mine is to paint the assembled track completely in gunmetal then, what I might best describe as a 'generous' dry-brushing with a rust (brick red) colour; then a final dry-brush with silver to highlight the parts that contact the ground and inside the guide teeth where they rub against the idler and road wheels, judged by looking at a real Shilka which shares the same running gear.

Markings consist of no more than some white side numbers. You can then weather to taste. I have to admit to one particular area of artistic licence, in that I couldn't quote a specific reference, but I felt the missiles would have been made elsewhere and have a different paint finish, so I chose an olive green for them - another Revell colour, Matt 46. It took a couple of coats of this over the grey primer, plus a black interior to the exhaust.

Summary

In summary an easy enough conversion to complete. It is a shame that those distinctive side rails are not included, but not the end of the world. Most modellers with a little experience shouldn't find them too difficult to do and it is always possible that someone could may up with a white metal accessory set for them, I suppose. Beyond that, the casting is to a high standard and the detail is good. The end result is impressive, and is an interesting addition to any collection of modern Soviet armour.

References

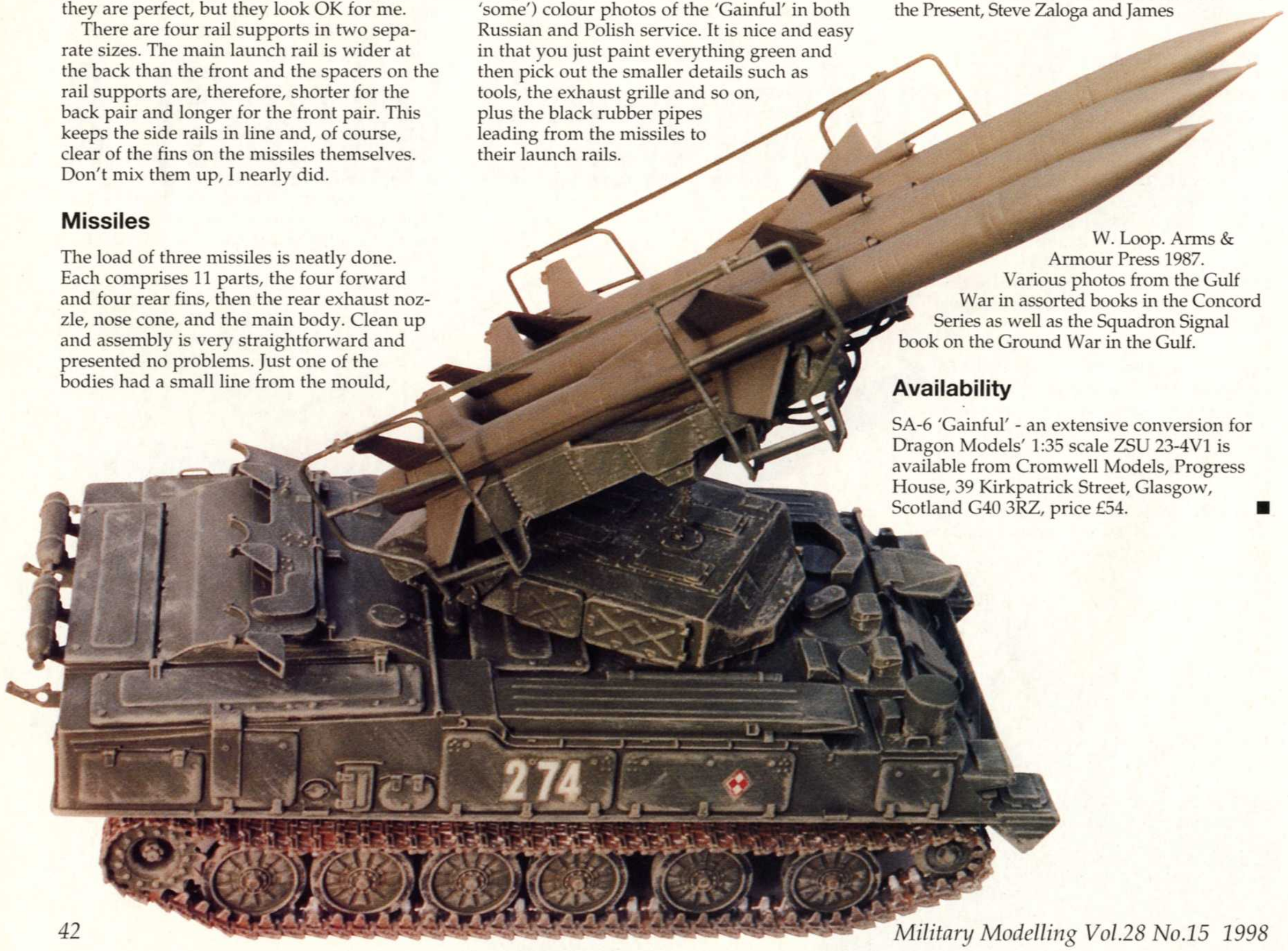
Weapons and Tactics of the Soviet Army, David C. Isby. Jane's 1980.

Soviet Tanks and Combat Vehicles, 1946 to the Present, Steve Zaloga and James W. Loop. Arms & Armour Press 1987.

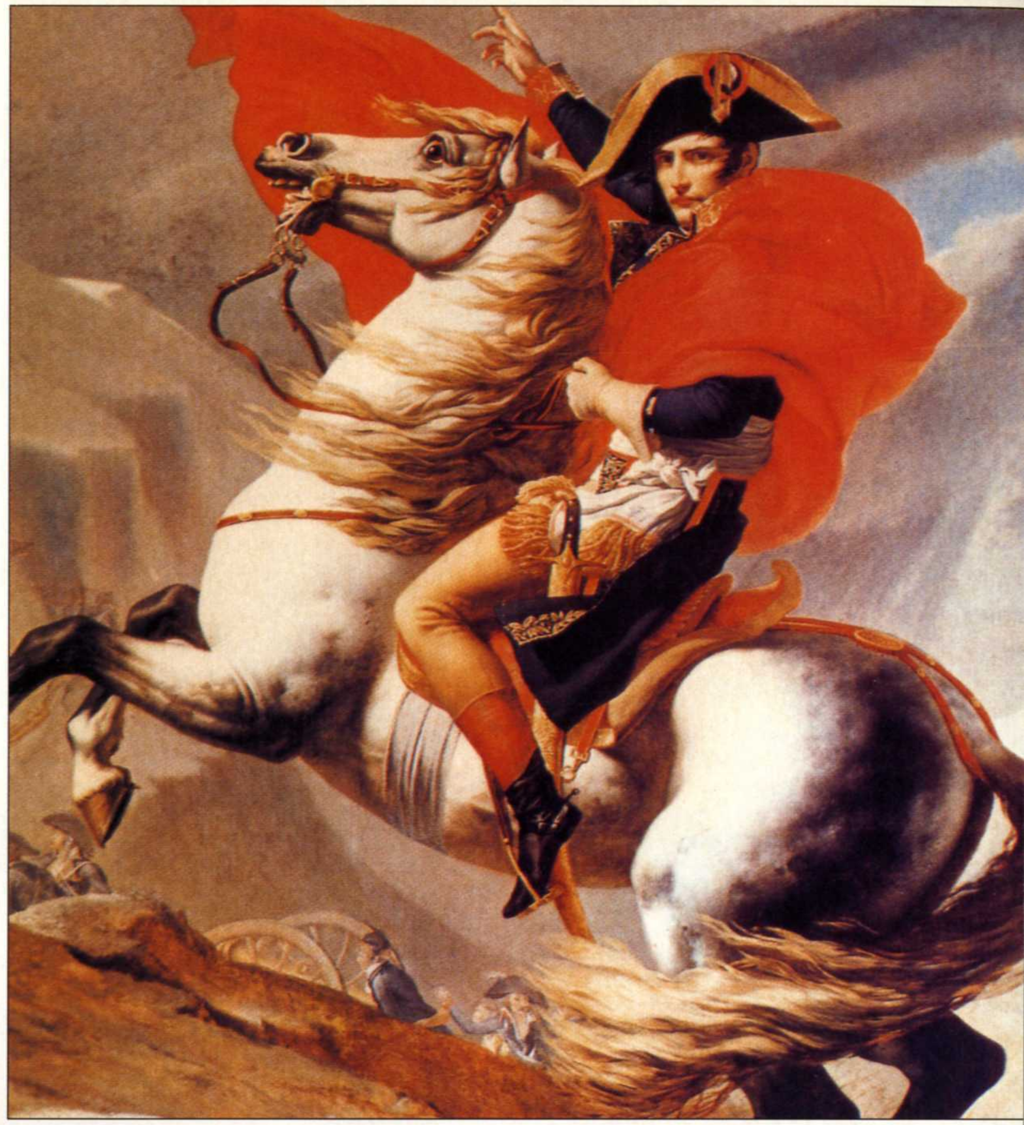
Various photos from the Gulf War in assorted books in the Concord Series as well as the Squadron Signal book on the Ground War in the Gulf.

Availability

SA-6 'Gainful' - an extensive conversion for Dragon Models' 1:35 scale ZSU 23-4V1 is available from Cromwell Models, Progress House, 39 Kirkpatrick Street, Glasgow, Scotland G40 3RZ, price £54. ■



Steve Kirtley assembles and paints Pegaso Models' kit based on the spirited painting by the artist Jacques Louis David of a younger Napoleon Bonaparte crossing the Alps prior to the Battle of Marengo



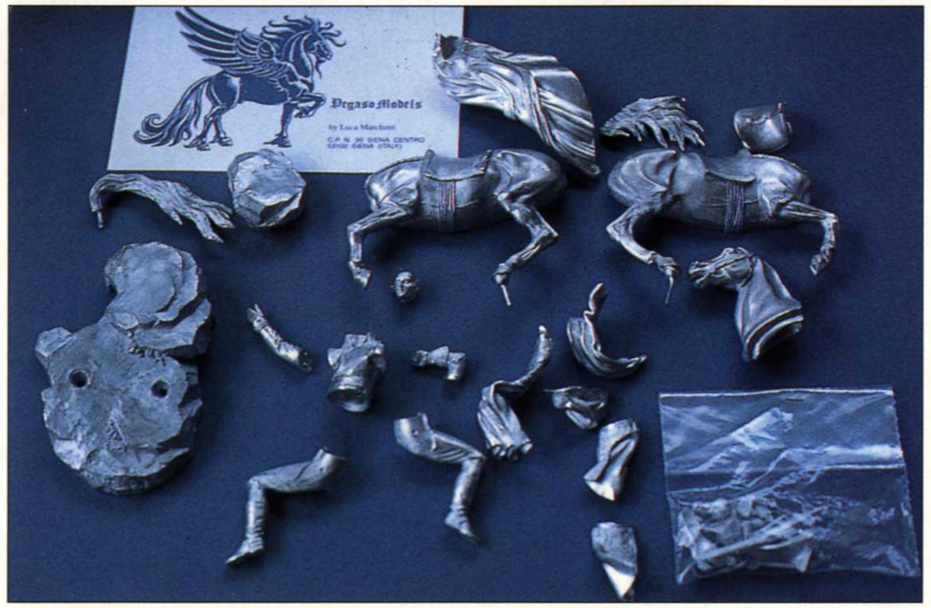
ABOVE: *A print of one of Jacques Louis David's paintings of Napoleon crossing the Alps to do battle with the Austrians at Marengo.* BELOW LEFT: *Pegaso's kit is quite complex - the contents displayed.*

Napoleon Before Marengo... and After David

I first saw this model at last year's Euro-Militaire, when the original sculpted and painted by Viktor Konnov, won a silver medal in the scratch/converted mounted figure class. I was very impressed with the quality of the figure, and especially the fact that it remained very faithful to the David painting. When I heard later that Pegaso were to produce the model as a commercial casting, I knew that I would have to make it at some point. I was therefore delighted when Ken Jones offered me the opportunity to paint up the review sample for ***Military Modelling***.

As already mentioned, the figure is based on the Jacques Louis David painting of Napoleon crossing the Alps. It was intended to portray in as dramatic as possible a light this important event preceding the victorious battle of Marengo, (14th June 1800). Napoleon is shown calm, pointing the way for the army, riding a rearing horse. He is very much in control of his destiny. There were a number of different versions painted by David, I have seen a piebald horse and a yellow cloak, but opted to go for the version for which I had a good reference painting which was of a grey horse and a red cloak!

The kit duly arrived and was immediately opened and carefully scrutinised. There was a lot of parts - see the photo! The castings were very clearly well-designed, with steel supports cast into the rearing back legs and only a modest amount of cleaning up prior to painting to do. Nevertheless, this shouldn't be rushed and I methodically filed mould lines, etc., using needle files and fine sandpaper, buffing with steel wool to finish off.

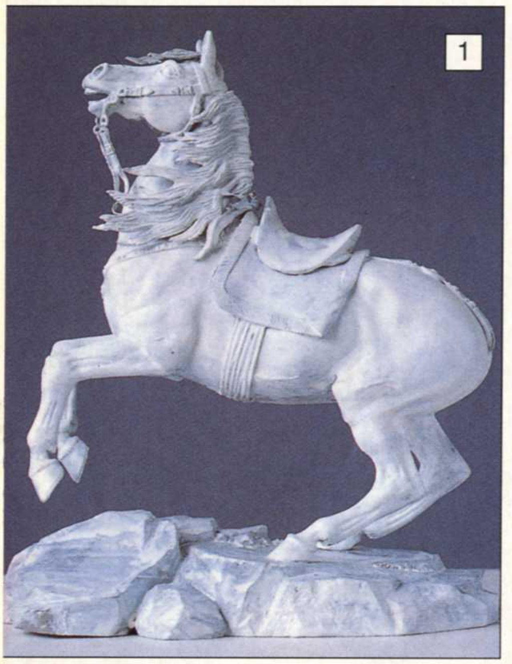


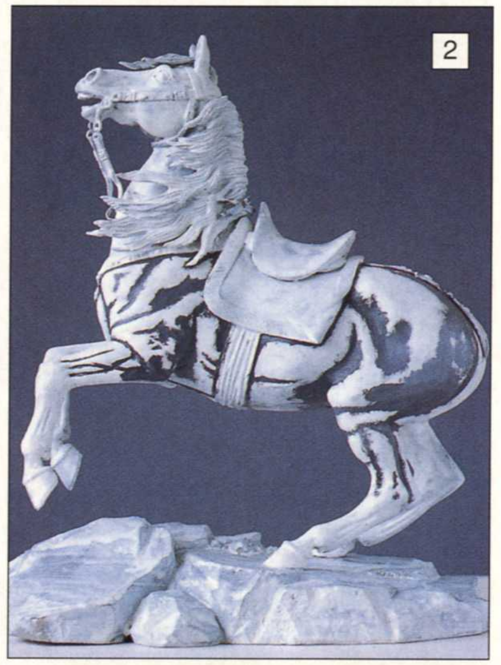
Care is also required with assembly, and again a methodical approach, using dry runs is needed. I had no real problems, although areas needing particular attention are the cloak and the fit of the sword scabbard. The cloak comes in four parts and, at first, I thought the weight of the largest part, the part flying in the wind near to Napoleon's right arm would prove problematical. In the event, I was wrong, the parts effectively wrap around the body and arms, which provide effective support. Great care is needed with the fit, and I did end up with a very small gap at one point. Rather than simply fill this, I added a modest additional crease, using Duro, to disguise this.

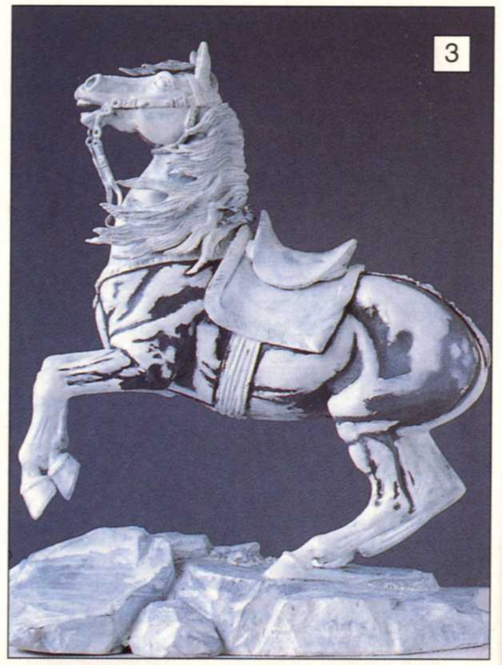
The scabbard fits cleverly behind the coat tail, not needing straps other than the part already cast onto it to fasten it in place. There is a chance that if you get the alignment of the parts awry, then it would not go straight into the gap intended. Again a little care is needed.

Thinking ahead, I also decided that I would want to attach the base of the figure to a wooden base (from Oakwood Studios) with screws and I drilled two small holes in the gaps between the rocks that make up the base, using a small hand drill.

After all this preparatory work, I ended up with three main subassemblies. The horse and saddle, Napoleon's torso and legs and finally his head and hat. The last two were mounted using super glue onto balsa poles







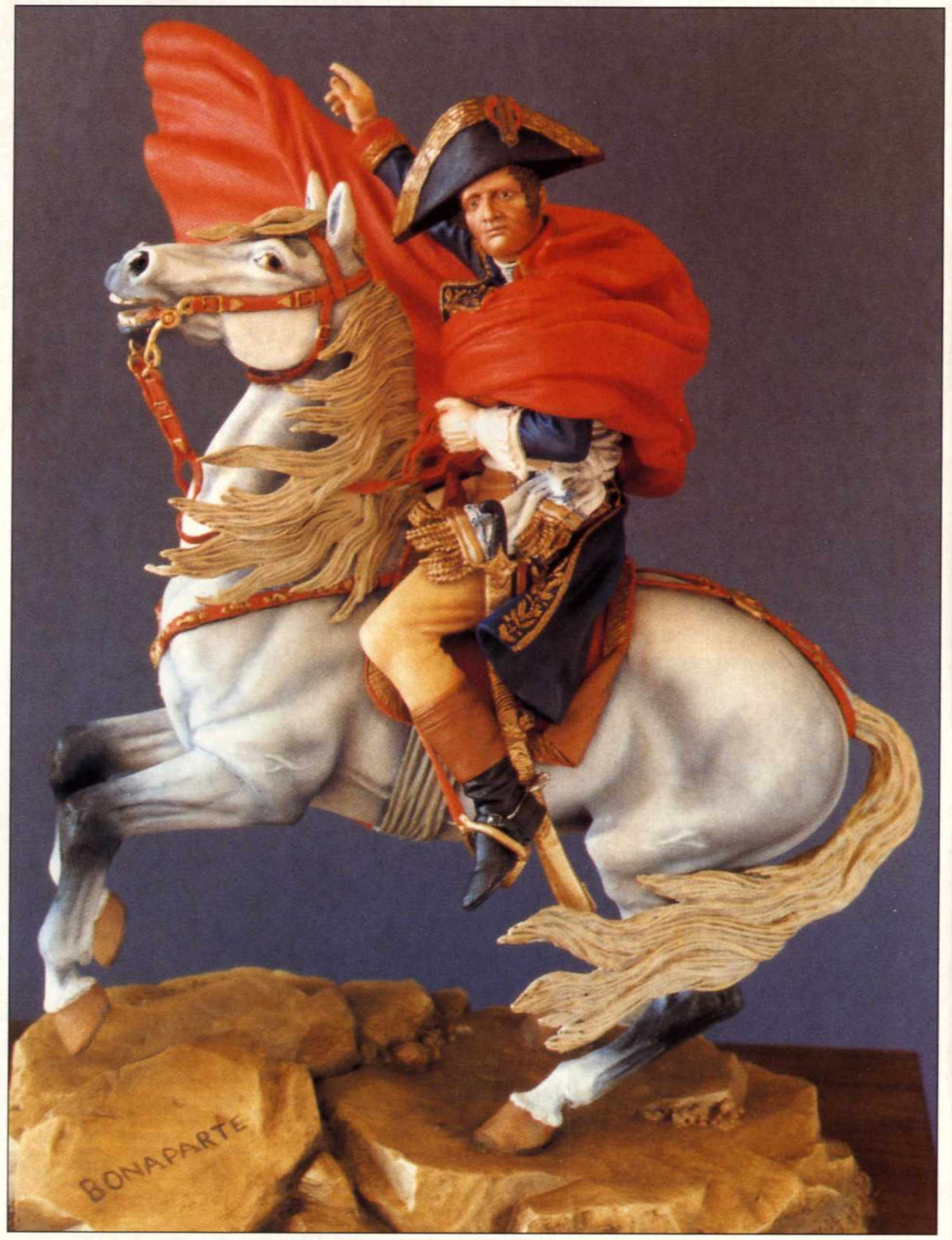
for ease of painting. I also drilled and added paper clip wire pins to locate the head to the body and the crutch to the horse to add a little strength to these joints.

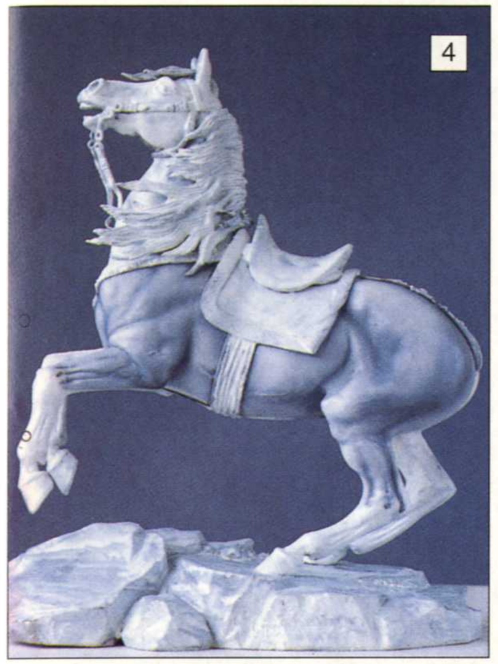
All these parts were undercoated using Humbrol Matt White in three to four very light coats, with a check each time for little areas where a little more sanding was required. Photo 1 shows the assembled horse undercoated and ready to be painted. Photo 2 has the shadow detail painted in. The shadow colour was mixed from Blue Black, Titanium White with a little Yellow Ochre and a small hint of Cadmium Red Deep (Winsor and Newton oil paints used unless otherwise stated). The darkest shadows are almost pure Blue Black, with varying amounts of Titanium White added for the dark coat areas identified from the painting.

Photo 3 has the Titanium White painted into the areas not painted with the shadow colours. At this stage, I try to lay the colour on as thinly as possible. Brush out small amounts of paint as smoothly as possible to lessen the appearance of brush marks. Whilst a little hint of the horse's coat texture is desirable, furrows in the paint are not! Photo 4 shows the horse after I had blended the whole together. Using a flat, 1/8-inch sable brush and a 'dabbing' action, I feathered the edges together. As well as shading the shadow tone into the overall white, this also dulls the white a little.

After everything has dried completely, I revisited the highlight areas with Titanium White, added wet to dry, and feathered at the edges. I also decided that the shadows on the horse's flanks were a little dark, and creating a lighter tone from the original mix of colours I painted over these shaded areas and again blended it in using a little Titanium White at the edges. This had the desired effect of toning these parts down. The head, legs and neck were painted later using the same technique.

The mane and tail were initially painted with a Yellow Ochre and Titanium White mix, which was painted with a little Raw Umber added to that same mixture. Once dry, I picked out the highlights with Naples Yellow. Yellow Ochre plus a little Burnt Umber were used to paint the hooves.





Saddlecloth and reins were painted largely with Cadmium Red Deep with a little Alizarin Crimson added on the saddlecloth to deepen it further. I added deep shadows using Purple Madder Alizarin and Burnt Umber. Where the saddlecloth lining is showing, I used Mars Brown lightened with Yellow Ochre and Titanium White added. This last colour dried rather glossy and I 'revisited' it later and toned it down with Humbrol Matt Varnish. Blue Black with Yellow Ochre and Titanium White completed the girth strap.

Painting Napoleon

Moving on to the figure, I decided to leave the cloak until last and start, as always, on the face. The basic colours used here were a base mix of Titanium White with Yellow Ochre added, and then a blend made from Venetian Red and Burnt Sienna was also added carefully, a little at a time, until I had a range of tones across the palette. A technique similar to painting the horse's coat was employed, using also Brown and Purple Madder Alizarin for really dark shadows. Pure Titanium White highlighted the face where appropriate and was used sparingly. The eyes were added later using Humbrol colours

The uniform was painted, in the main, using the technique detailed for painting the horse using the following colours:

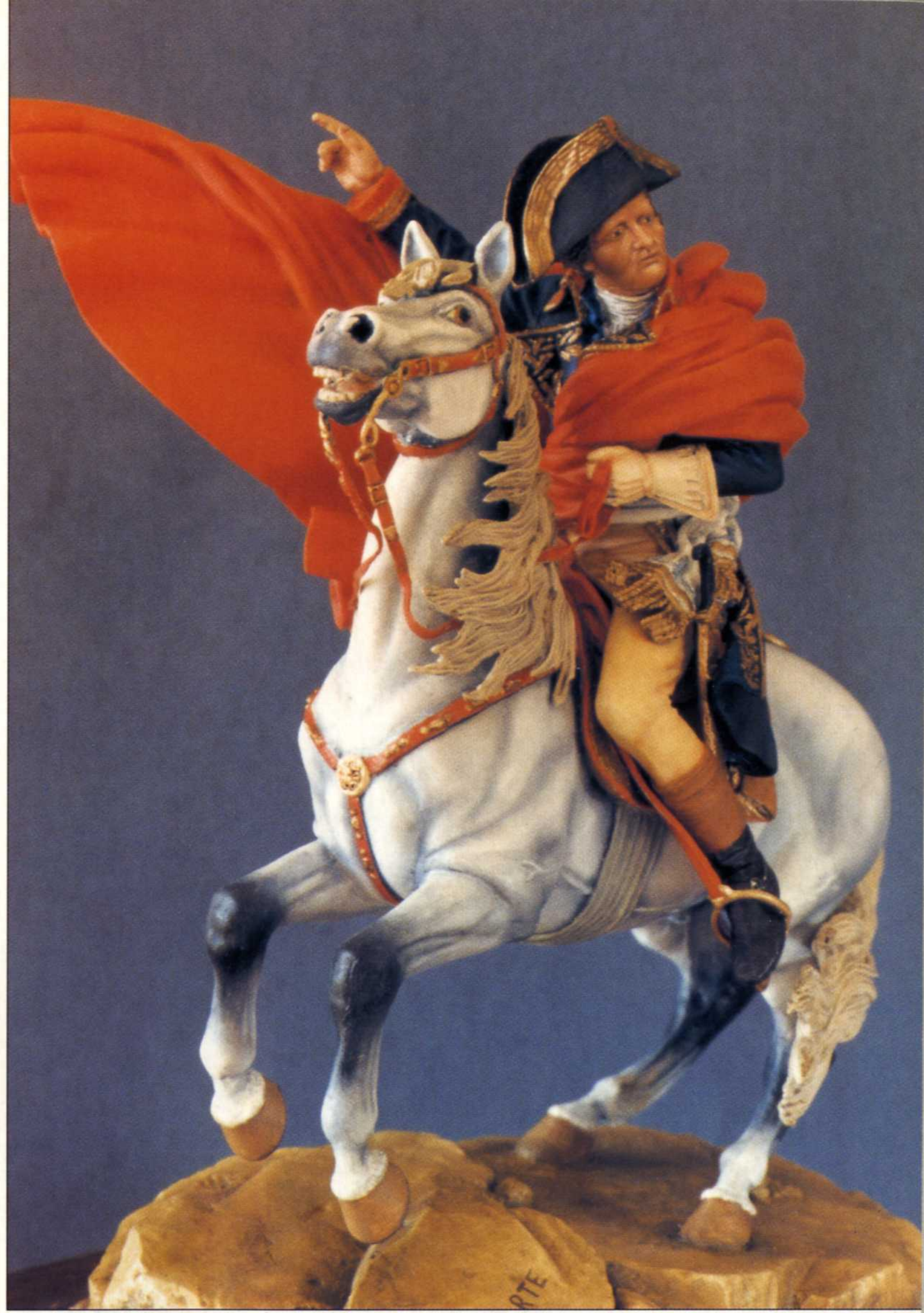
Breeches: Base Yellow Ochre and Titanium White, shade Burnt Sienna, highlight Titanium White.

Jacket: Prussian Blue with Titanium White added. Shade Blue Black and highlight Titanium White with a touch of Naples Yellow added. Again a glossy sheen resulted and was covered with matt varnish later when completely dry.

Sash: as for the horse's girth strap, but lighter tones. Pure Titanium White used later to pick out highlights.

Hat and Boots: Blue Black highlighted using Titanium White and Yellow Ochre.

The gilt details were painted using the colours detailed in my earlier 'General de Division' article in Vol. 28 Issue 6 of Military Modelling. Briefly this comprised: Roll Call Gold with Burnt Sienna, Artists' quality white spirit and Humbrol gloss varnish (Clear Poly 35) added for the initial shadow colour, with essentially the same colour with a little Chrome Yellow substituted instead of the Sienna.



I eventually reached a point where only the cloak remained to paint. I must admit that I wasn't looking forward to this part. Firstly it is such a dominant part of the model and also, red is not a particularly easy colour to complete in oils. I used two basic colours, Cadmium Red Deep and Cadmium Red. These were the artists' quality Winsor and Newton paints, which are not cheap! Painting the Cadmium Red Deep first in the shadow areas and the Cadmium Red everywhere else, I blended this all carefully - again broadly similar to painting the horse. I was anxious not to overdo the contrasts and being reasonably pleased with the end result, I simply picked out the deepest shadow areas adding Purple Madder Alizarin to Cadmium Red Deep, and the highlights with Naples Yellow added to Cadmium Red.

Finishing off

The various sub-assemblies were then glued together using epoxy in the main with a little super glue for smaller parts. The base was glued and screwed to a wood base from Oakwood, before this was painted using Blue Black, Yellow Ochre and Titanium White, effectively taking paint off with a large brush to create highlight and shade. Once this had dried, I added the 'Bonaparte' letters freehand in similar style to the original painting. A brass plaque completed the base.

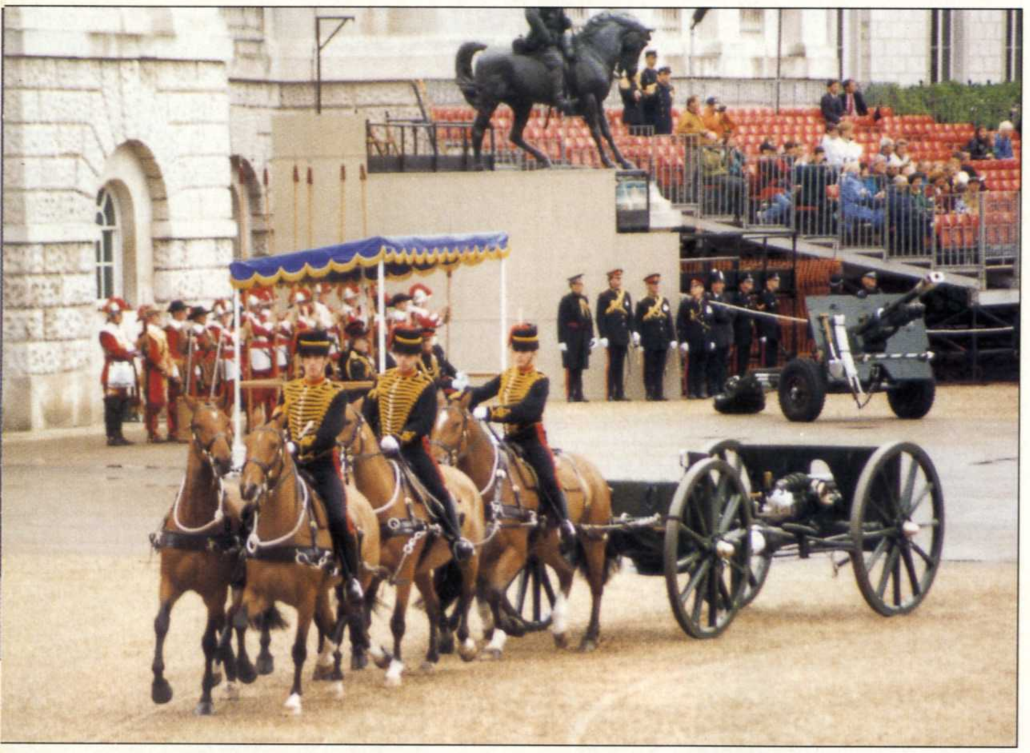
This is not a figure for the beginner, containing a large number of parts and requiring careful assembly. I did, however, thoroughly enjoy painting it and it forms a spectacular addition to any model display. I recommend it whole-heartedly!

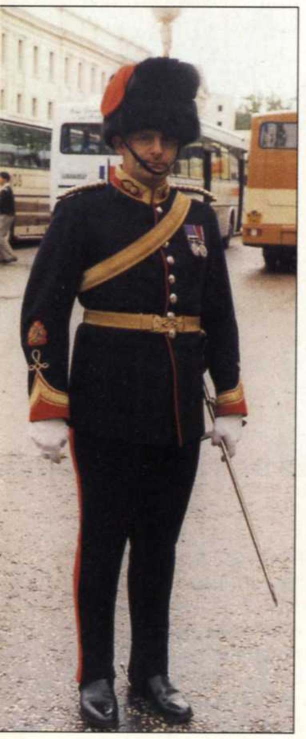
Availability

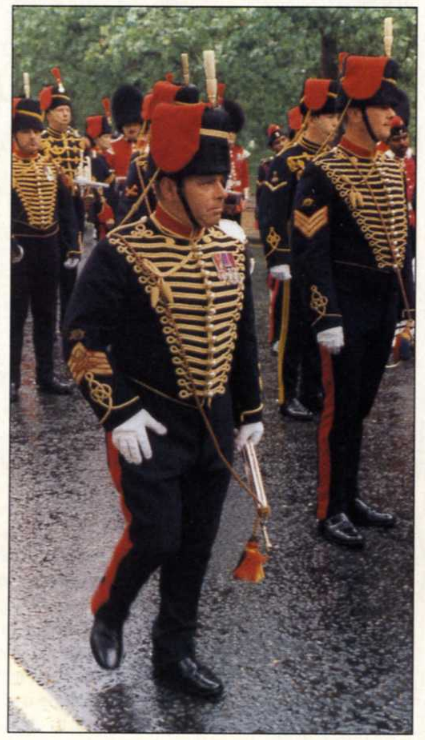
Pegaso Models are available from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ. Napoleon costs £120. ■

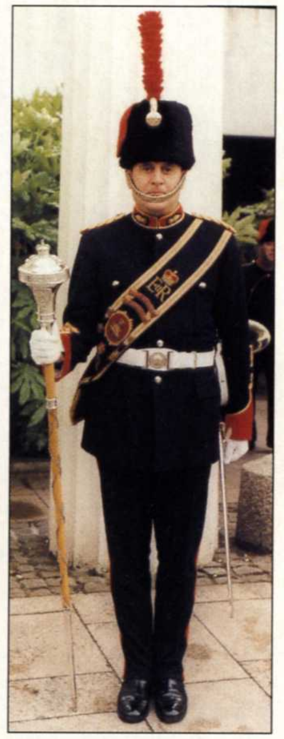
The Royal Artillery Sunset Ceremony

Gary Gibbs reports on a recent event that took place on Horse Guards Parade in London









ABOVE: The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery performing their musical drive. Photo: courtesy of Bob Reece. BELOW LEFT: The WO1 Bandmaster of the Band of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. BELOW CENTRE: A Trumpet Major of The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery. BELOW RIGHT: The Drum Major of the 103rd Regiment of Artillery (The Lancashire Artillery Volunteers).

During a week in early June this year the Royal Artillery and the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery performed Beating Retreat on Horse Guards Parade.

The saluting officers were His Royal Highness The Duke of York, CVO ADC; Brigadier M. G. Douglas-Withers CBE ADC, Director Royal Artillery; Dr John Reid MP, Minister for the Armed Forces and for the final performance, Her Majesty the Queen, Captain-General Royal Artillery took the salute.

There were 300 troops involved and they got together for the first time about eight days before at Woolwich to practice their music under the direction of Major Geoffrey Kingston PSM, Director of Music Royal Artillery.

On the Sunday before the weekday ceremonies were to take place a full-dress rehearsal was performed on Horse Guards Parade where final preparations were made before the first performance on the Monday.

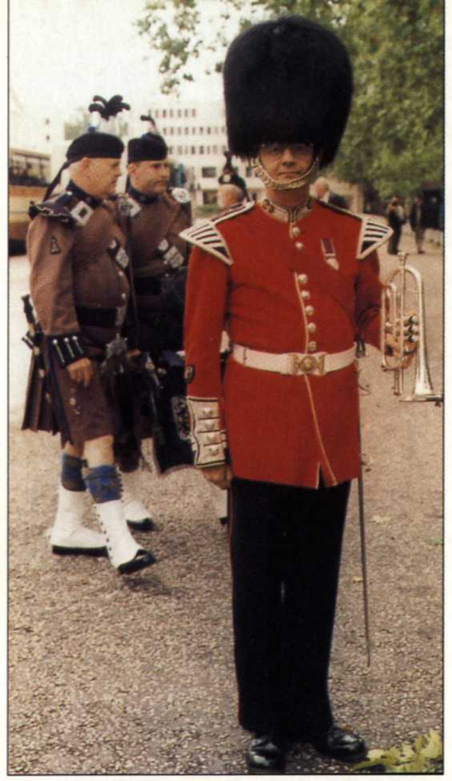
In addition to the British units involved with the Sunset Ceremony there were a number from overseas, the largest contingent being that of the French *La Musique Principale de l'Armée de Terre*. They started life as a Corps of Drums in Rochefort in 1945 and, in 1946, moved to the 3rd Battalion of Colonial Infantry at Versailles, and in 1952 officially became, *Musique Principale des Troupes Coloniales*. In 1958 the Band's name was changed again to *Musique Principale des Troupes de Marine* (hence the anchor badges worn). In 1997 the name was changed once again, to *Musique Principale de l'Armée de Terre* and is under the command of the *Chef de Musique des Armées* ably assisted by a *Chef de Musique*, a *Sous-Chef de Musique* and a Drum Major who, in turn, are all under the command of the General Military Governor of Paris. The Band has a total of 102 musicians.

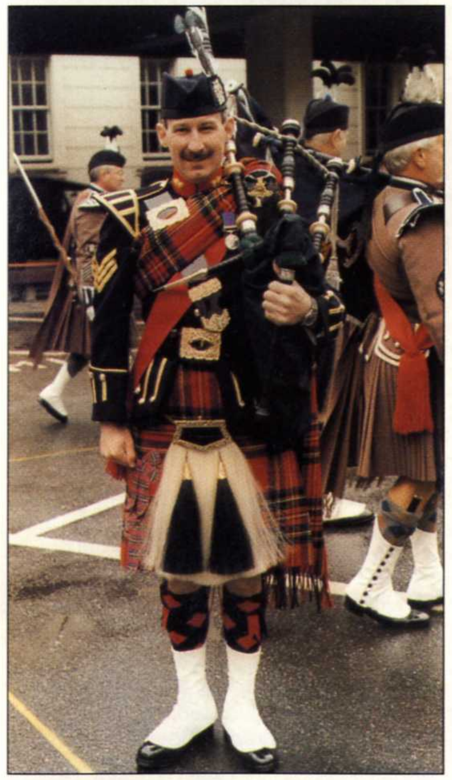
The 62nd United States Army Band based at the Air Defence School at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas also sent some pipes and drums to participate in the Beating Retreat ceremony. In 1997 the American Pipes and Drums formed a 'Bond of Friendship' with the Pipes and Drums of the 105th Regiment of Royal Artillery (Volunteers) who are based in Edinburgh.

The Band of the Sri Lanka Artillery was also on parade. This band was formed in 1990, comprising 18 members which includes the Bandmaster. The Band's first performance was for His Excellency The President of Sri Lanka in 1991. The Band regularly performs in massed displays and it also performed in front of His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales during his tour of Sri Lanka for their 50th Anniversary of Independence celebrations.

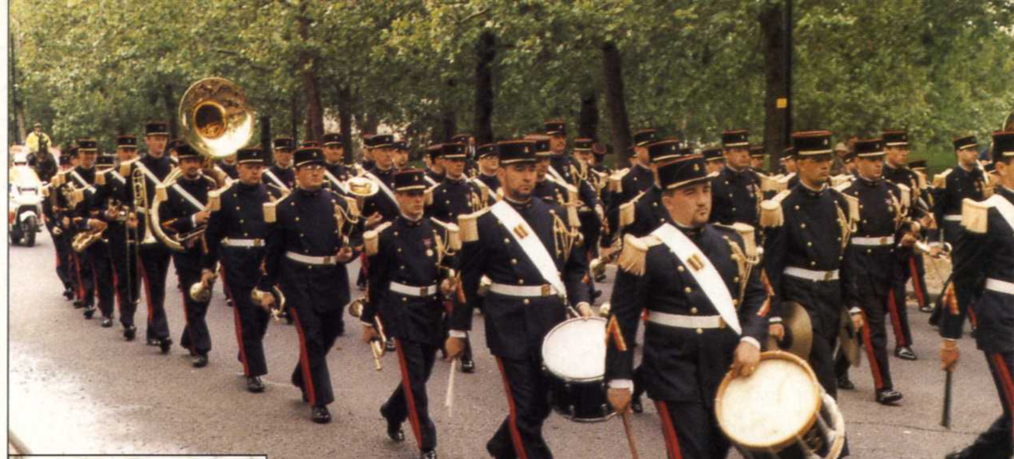
The principal British band was that of the Royal Artillery who can trace their musical association back to 1557 when they first had drummers and fifers. The Band itself traces its origins back to 1762 when it was formed at Minden in Germany. It began with just eight musicians and, by the late 1960s, had over 100 musicians. The Government's 'Options for Change' has reduced their numbers to 50, but the Band performs all over the world from as far a field as the United States of America, Iceland and Cyprus.

The King's Troop Royal Artillery performed a musical ride on Horse Guards during the ceremony with their 13 pdr guns. When on parade with their guns the Regiment take precedent over all other units in the British Army on the right of the line. The King's Troop also supplied the Fanfare Trumpeters for the Ceremony.

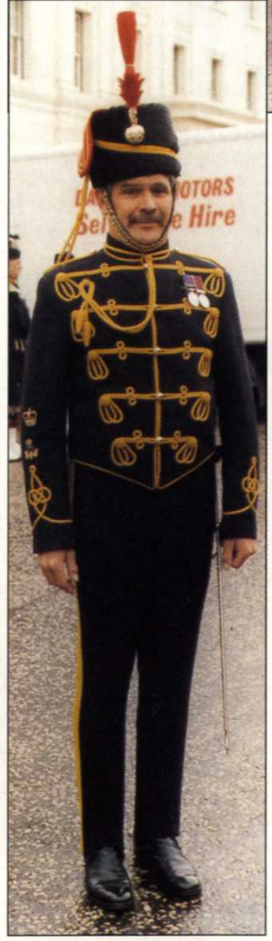


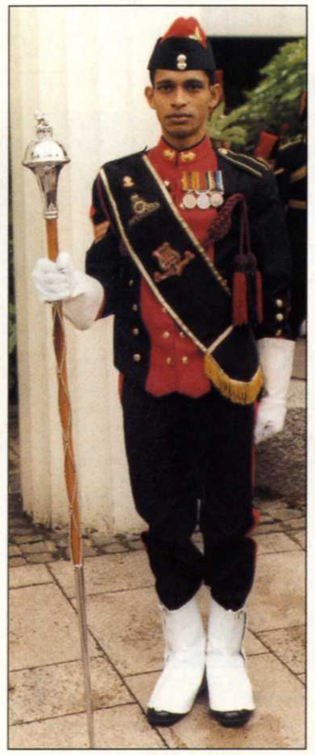


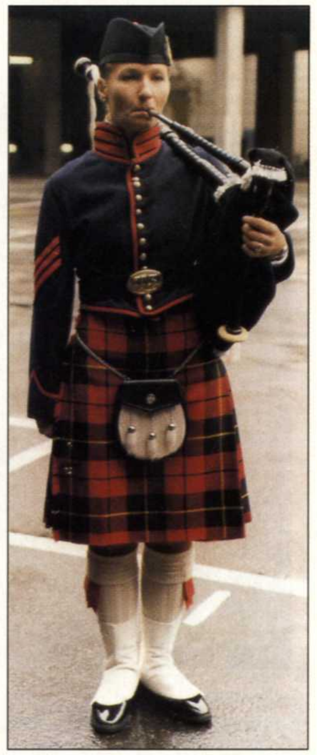
ABOVE: Band WO2 of the Band of the Honourable Artillery Company. The uniform worn follows that of the Grenadier Guards except that the lace, buttons, etc., are silver instead of gold. BELOW: The Pipe Sergeant of the 204th (Tyneside Scottish) Battery 101st (Northumbrian) Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers).



ABOVE: The French La Musique Principale de l'Armée de Terre Band seen here marching down Bird Cage Walk to Horse Guards.







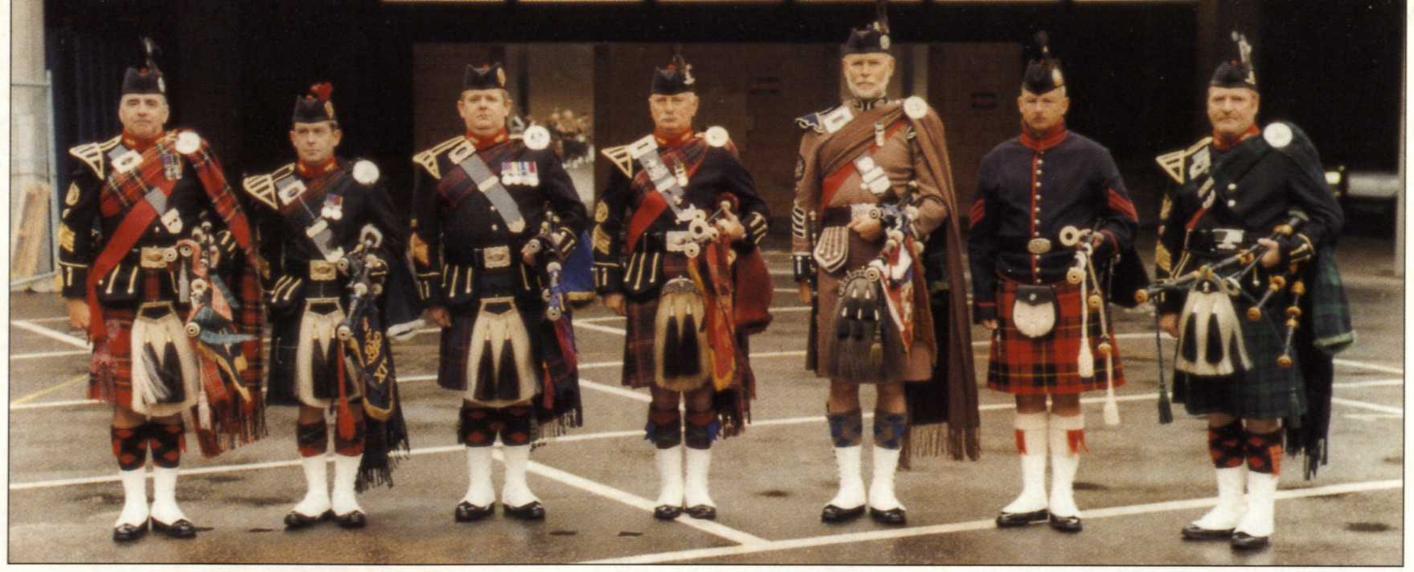
ABOVE LEFT: The Band WO2 of the South Nottinghamshire Hussars Yeomanry Band.
ABOVE CENTRE: The Drum Major of the Band of the Sri Lanka Artillery.
ABOVE RIGHT: A female Piper of the 62nd United States Army Band.

The 19th Regiment of Royal Artillery (The Highland Gunners) were formed in 1947 after the disbandment of the 17th Field Regiment. In the 1970s the Regiment supported the Royal School of Artillery at Larkhill and in 1990 moved to its present base in Colchester where it became part of 24 Airmobile Brigade. The Regiment has completed tours of Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Cyprus with the United Nations. Its Pipes and Drums have paraded since the 1950s and its Pipe Major saw service with the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Scots and the Gordon Highlanders.

'The Lowland Gunners' - 40th Regiment Royal Artillery were first formed in 1947 as 40th Field Regiment and later inherited the traditions of the 10th Field Regiment who, in itself, was formed from the 69th (West Riding) Field Regiment. The Regiment has served in Borneo, Northern Ireland, Belize, the Falklands, Kuwait and many other places around the world. In 1994 it was equipped with the AS-90, considered by many to be the world's best 155mm self-propelled howitzer. The Pipes and Drums of the 40th Regiment were formed in 1994. At present there are four drummers and five pipers and another five members are to join them shortly from the Scottish Division School of Music for Pipes and Drums, Glencorse.

'The Honourable Artillery Company' was named as such in 1685 and its Company of Pikemen and Musketeers are the personal bodyguard of the Lord Major of London. The Regiment also carries out firing Royal Salutes from the Tower of London and recently some members performed public duties at Buckingham Palace. On parade during Beating Retreat were the Regiment's Band and the Pikemen and Musketeers.

The 307th (South Nottinghamshire Hussars Yeomanry, Royal Horse Artillery) Battery, 100th (Yeomanry) Regiment of Royal Artillery (Volunteers) was also on parade. The South Nottinghamshire Hussars were formed in 1794 not seeing their first action until over 100 years later during the Boer War, 1900-02 as part of the Imperial Yeomanry. In 1922 the Regiment was incorporated into the Royal Artillery. They saw action at the Siege of Tobruk in the Western Desert during WWII and after that war became an Observation Post Battery. They recently re-equipped as a Field Gun Battery



ABOVE: Some of the Pipe Majors on parade. From left to right: 204th (Tyneside Scottish) Battery; 19th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Highland Gunners); 40th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lowland Gunners); 103rd Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lancashire Artillery Volunteers); The London Scottish; 62nd United States Army Band and the 105th Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers). BELOW LEFT: The Pipe Major of the 103rd Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lancashire Artillery Volunteers). BELOW CENTRE LEFT: Pipe Major 104th Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers) wearing Ancient Lindsay Tartan. BELOW CENTRE RIGHT: The Pipe Major of the 105th Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers). BELOW RIGHT: A Piper of the 40th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lowland Gunners).

with FH70 as part of 100th (Yeomanry) Regiment. Music for the Regiment was first supplied in 1825 by a mounted band which lasted until 1941 when it was sacrificed at the Battle of Knightsbridge. The Band in its present form was formed in 1954 and is one of only two brass bands still serving in the Territorial Army, (the other being that of the TA band of the Royal Regiment of Wales).

The 204th (Tyneside Scottish) Battery 101st (Northumbrian) Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers) had four battalions serving in WWI, but were disbanded after the War. They were re-raised in 1939 as the 12th Battalion (Tyneside Scottish) Durham Light Infantry and afterwards becoming 1st Battalion Tyneside Scottish (The Black Watch, Royal Highland Regiment). In 1947 the Regiment was again re-constituted as 670 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Artillery (TA) and in 1958 became a battery of the 439th Light Air Defence Regiment. The reductions in 1967 saw the Regiment reverting to a rifle company of the 4/5/6th Battalion Royal Northumberland Fusiliers. They were then re-rolled again as the 101st Regiment and are now the ARRC Orbat, part of the 1st Artillery Brigade 203 (Elswich) Battery. When the four battalions of the Tyneside Scottish were raised during WWI each one had its own pipes and drums. The Pipes and Drums have kept their association with the Black Watch by wearing the red hackle.

The 103rd Regiment Royal Artillery (The Lancashire Artillery Volunteers) were raised in 1859 as 23 companies of Artillery. During WWI they formed 25 Artillery and Infantry Brigades and during WWII, 17 Royal Artillery regiments. In 1967 the various regiments amalgamated to form 103rd (Lancashire Artillery Volunteers) Light Air Defence Regiment, Royal Artillery. In 1977 the Regiment was re-designated as the 103rd (Lancashire Artillery Volunteers) Air Defence Regiment Royal Artillery being first equipped with Blowpipe anti-aircraft missiles and subsequently Javelin surface-to-air missiles. The Band was formed in 1967 from members of the Lancashire RA, Royal Engineers, East and South Lancashire Regiments, Lancashire Fusiliers, Loyals, Manchester Regiment and the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry. The Pipes and Drums were formed from its predecessor regiments including those of the 8th (Volunteers) Irish Battalion, the King's Regiment and the 2nd (Volunteers) Scottish Battalion The King's Regiment. Up until 1970 they wore the Irish saffron coloured kilt, when the then Honorary Colonel, Brigadier Sir Douglas Crawford granted permission for the Crawford Tartan to be worn.

The 104th Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers) were formed in 1967 as 104th Light Air Defence Regiment. It changed its 40mm Bofors guns for Blowpipe missiles in 1978 and was later re-equipped with Javelin missiles in 1992.

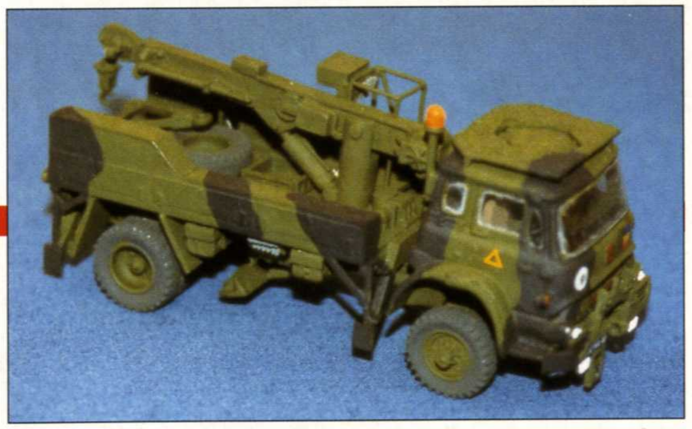
The 105th Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers) was re-designated in 1986 and can trace its lineage back to the raising of Volunteers in 1859. The Pipes and Drums were formed in 1962 as part of the 278 (City of Edinburgh) Field Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers).

The London Scottish, 'A' Company of the London Regiment can trace its descent to the Highland Armed Association of London in 1793 and the Loyal North Britons of 1803. They are distinctive in their Hodden Grey kilts. The Regiment fought in both World Wars and one battalion fought as 97th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Artillery Territory Army (London Scottish). As well as serving as HAA during the Battle of Britain they also saw action in Sicily and Italy. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother is the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment and the Pipe Major is her personal piper. The Pipes and Drums were formed with the Regiment in 1859 and have performed all over the world as well as London public duties. ■

SMALL SCALE SCENE

Robin Buckland's monthly column for military vehicle modellers

MILITARY VEHICLES



BW Models 1:76 scale recovery version of the Bedford MK.

Just to prove you never know when you will come across something interesting, I was in our local John Lewis department store recently, and in the craft section there was a demonstration of Stone Craft kits. On the table were some examples of just what you could achieve which included bridges and castles right down to some in 1:76 scale. Real sandstone and oak for any timbers was used and the end results looked absolutely superb. You can cut, drill and glue the material just like any other modelling medium and I hope to try some to make a small background. I'll let you know how I get on with it at another time. Just goes to show you never know when or where you'll find something different.

Dragon Models Ltd

Dragon just keep on going with their new releases and re-releases and it doesn't seem so long ago that I first heard news of them as a 'new' manufacturer who was going to 'do modern Soviet vehicles'. If you had told me then the sort of subjects they would also cover, such as *Maus*, German infantry carts, *Pupchen* and railway wagons, then I would have probably thought you were nuts. Yet all those things have now appeared as the width of subjects DML are prepared to tackle seems to know no bounds. We really are very lucky these days with just what can be found on model shop shelves.

Plus Model

Plus Model are a range of 1:35 scale resin kits and conversions from the Czech Republic. One of their early releases was a conversion for the *SdKfz 250/1 Neu*, and one more recent is for the same basic vehicle, but the *SdKfz 250/9* with the turret-mounted 2cm gun. In other words, the later variants of both Tamiya kits. I'm building the *SdKfz 250/9* and have to say, though not finished yet, how straightforward the conversion is to do. The kit is produced to a high quality with polyurethane resin and etched brass parts, and clearly has been well thought out.

It is, of course, to convert the Tamiya base kit and the bad news for Plus Model must be the appearance of Dragon's 'little surprise package' - a plastic kit of the *SdKfz 250/1 Neu*, which I am sure will be followed by other versions. To counter this of course, Plus Model have also released a complete kit, for a Russian GAZ M1 car. I think, though correct me if I'm wrong, that this is their first full kit, all previous releases being conversions. It is very nicely produced, with full instructions and if you haven't looked at Plus Models yet, I recommend you do.

One Plus Model kit I am aware of, though haven't had the fortune to see, is a conversion on the old Italeri (ex-Max, ex-Airfix,) CMP, which gives you the 8cwt HUP (Heavy Utility Personnel). If it is as good as the rest, that would be a good one to go for. Plus Models are imported and available via F&F Models, 44 Bretby Road, Newhall, Swadlincote, Derbys DE11 0LJ.

AFV Club

A few words about the AFV Club *Wiesel* Mk20A1 kit. Having now built up this one there are a couple of comments. First impressions over the quality of the detail, including the etched steel fret that comes with the kit, are fulfilled. For such a tiny vehicle this really is a neat package. One or two errors have crept in, however; watch out for a slightly poor fit on the rear of the hull top, and beware a couple of instances of misnumbered parts in the instruction sheet. There are a couple of cases of this so be careful to double-check and identify the parts against the numbers. The one I nearly missed was a little pin in the turret/gun section which is numbered as one of the tiny handles that go onto an ammo bin. Minor points like that aside, I love the kit itself, partly for making me do a vehicle that, being honest, wouldn't have been a subject I would have gone looking for. Having built it I am now keen to start on the companion TOW version, which also has some interior details. The Museum Ordnance Special on the *Wiesel* family is an excellent reference source if you are building either or both of these kits.

Hart Models

Having already mentioned the CMP earlier, and with Tamiya's 1:35 scale Quad and 25 pdr gun and limber being re-released, it's appropriate then to mention Hart Models who have produced a 1:48 scale CMP Quad, complete with limber and 25 pdr. The body of the Quad is a superb resin casting, while the limber, gun and the details for the Quad are all in white metal. As ever, Hart Models make a very good quality product, all with clear instructions, decals, and all securely packaged. Assembly is quite straightforward, with just basic cleaning up required for all parts. Essentially, it is a simple assembly job, but the end result is a bit more unusual because Hart's artillery tractor is not the ubiquitous Morris and one of the points I think that makes it more interesting. Available from Hart Models, at the Cricket Green, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hants RG 27 8QB

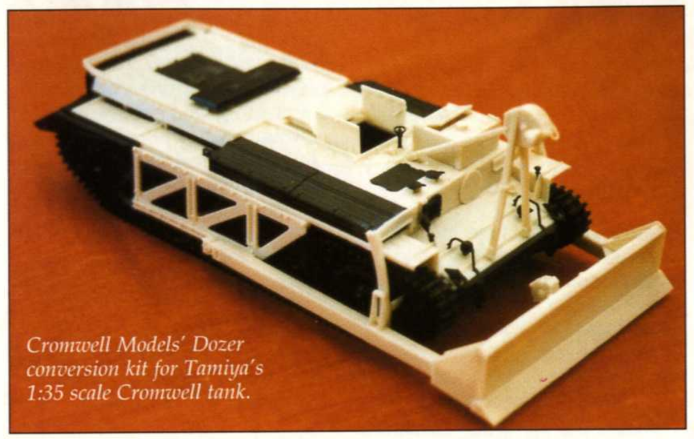
Matador Models

Matador continue to expand their ranges, in 1:76, 1:48 and 1:35 scales although it is the smaller 1:76 scale this month with two complete kits of German trucks now available. One is the Henschel 33D1 GS and the other a Büssing Nag 500S. Both kits are made up from polyurethane resin and metal parts, and come complete with assembly instructions. There is some cleaning up to do on both the resin and metal parts, but nothing difficult. I always remember the Henschel for being the first subject I scratch built many years ago, following an article in an old *Airfix Magazine*. I am pleased to say that despite still having that original model still in a drawer somewhere, I'll keep it hidden rather than put it up for a comparison! The Büssing is a relatively large truck, but does make a change from the Opel *Blitz*. I can remember when any German soft skin was a real rarity, before Esci did their Opels, Airfix theirs, and Matchbox the Krupp *Protze*, so well done to Matador for releasing them.

Matador have a simple conversion for the Matchbox Sherman 'Firefly' to produce a 75mm gun turret for the M4A4, but mounting the aircraft 6-pound rockets and launchers on each side, like those mounted on some vehicles of the Guards Armoured division towards the end of WWII. These rockets were more usually seen beneath the wings of a Typhoon! As for the conversion, the turret and its accompanying missiles simply replace the 17 pdr armed turret supplied in the kit. Quick and simple! Matador Models are at 6 Cliffe Road, Barton on Sea, New Milton, Hants BH25 7PB.

Cromwell Models

Cromwell Models who, apart from recently releasing their 1:35 scale Matador truck as a follow on from the earlier Dorchester Armoured Command Vehicle, have also some new WWII figures in this scale. I was really taken two vehicle-related figures, one of which had the edge on the other for me. Both are mounted on motorcycles - one in *Afrika Korps* dress (shorts in other words) and the second in a greatcoat, pulling on the handlebars and looking around as he turns. These are reasonably-priced and Cromwell continue to concentrate on figures and, in my opinion to good effect. At the same time they have released a three (half) figure set for a Cromwell tank crew, aimed at the new Tamiya kit. Still, being Cromwell Models I suppose



Cromwell Models' Dozer conversion kit for Tamiya's 1:35 scale Cromwell tank.

Cromwell Models are going into 1:35 scale figures in a big way - crews for Tamiya's Cromwell and Italeri's RSO with 7.5cm PaK.

they should! All available from Cromwell Models, Progress House, 39 Kirkpatrick Street, Glasgow, Scotland G40 3RZ.

Warriors

The editor passed on the Warriors' 1:35 scale figure of the British Tank commander. Ideal for the new Tamiya Cromwell amongst others, I was really quite impressed by it. Cast in resin the detail comes out crisply, which is good for painting. I also liked the basic anatomy of the chap, who is casually posed where all too often some figures are let down by being badly proportioned. This one is really rather good. Available from LSA Models, 151 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 3HD.

Pol Models

Pol Models continue to be busy in bringing in kits from Eastern Europe. I am working my way through building the Techmod *PzKpfw II Ausf L Luchs*, and have to say it is a pleasant kit to build. The running gear locates nicely, as does the upper hull detail. The turret is the next item I have yet to complete. The only major replacement I plan for this kit is to add the Jordi Rubio 2cm gun barrel which looks much better.

Pol Models sent some Eastern European publications, one of which is a magazine, *Model es makett Extra*, No.3 from Hungary. This special issue is filled with photos from WWII taken in Hungary, showing both armoured and softskin equipment in use there. With both Hungarian and English captions for the pictures, these are great with around 100 new photos, none of which I'd seen before. Unusual items like the *Zrinyi* SP gun, *Toldi* light tank, *Raba Botund* trucks, German aircraft and AFVs on rail cars, SWS, British artillery and limbers, a captured Commer truck in German service, and even an armoured riverboat (minesweeper). It really is a fascinating reference, priced at less than £6 too and available from Pol Models,

Some other unexpected items from Russia are some limited production run 1:72 scale kits. These are a bit 'rough', but I would liken them to the early short run aircraft kits that were available here some years ago. The kits provide the main parts, but you will need some modelling skills to get the best from them. So far they include a BMP1 and BMP2 and the BTR 70. These are not to everyone's taste, but if you want to do some 'modelling', and enjoy tackling something a bit unusual, then you might like to try these. So, not for the faint-hearted, but certainly something different. There is a T72 but I'll say more about that by itself next time. Supplies are very limited, but if you are interested, contact Pol Models 64 Cumberland Road, Acton, W3 6RY for details.

Gramodels

Gramodels have begun the process giving their models a more professional presentation. New items, in both 1:76 scale and 1:150 scale are now being boxed for sale, and some new releases are being worked on. If you visited the model tent at the Beltring show you will have seen the work in progress on the master of a 1:150 scale LCT4. Couple this with items such as the AVRE 'Funnies' in this much smaller scale range and here are the makings of a very interesting model group, and one which won't require so much space to display. Added to other small landing craft they already produce, a landing beach diorama beckons for the future. In this small scale they have added some Panthers, with A, D, and G versions all available. The other new one, and associated with the D-Day landings, is a Sherman DD with the screens lowered. It has a resin hull and turret, while the running gear is made up from white metal units. In 1:76 scale they have released a *Landwasserschlepper*, a relatively simple model, with single-piece track units to go onto the hull and all cast in polyurethane resin.

Mick Bell

Mick Bell produces a wide range of 1:76 scale drawings. His is an interesting list, especially if you are interested in French WWII equipment, but there's still lots of other things. Two samples I have are a Laffly S15T 6x6, which has two versions on the sheet, one with a full body and another with a recovery crane on the rear, and an Australian truck. The latter is the Truck, Cargo, 5-ton, GS, w/winch, F1 to give it the title on the drawing, was used in the Vietnam war by Australian forces. It would go well with an Aussie Centurion, and make for a different subject in a diorama. Available from Mick Bell, The Belfry, 23 Brinkhall Way, Welton, Lincoln, Lincs LN2 3NS.

Armour Distribution

Model Kasten are not a new name, though I haven't featured them all that often in this column over the years. Armour Distribution (a division of Accurate Armour) are now the UK importers for the range, and I think have held prices to a reasonable level. They came to my aid with one of the older sets recently, for non-working track for the *Panzer I* which I shall be using to replace the track provided with the new 1:35 scale *PzKpfw I Ausf A* model from HiPM. Injection moulded plastic Model Kasten really are an excellent product. Yes, it is time consuming to remove all the links from the sprues, but if you spread the work over a couple of evenings it makes the whole thing less of a drag. I'm gradually being converted to liking and using individual link track. An alternative metal track is available, but more of that next time. Model Kasten track sets are available from Armour Distribution, Units 15/16, Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow, Inverclyde, Scotland PA14 5DG.

Korpak

Amidst a package I received via the editor was a little 1:87 scale kit from Koprak in Russia. It is a relatively basic kit of the T34/85, looks like a very early Minitank, but once together looks OK. No, it isn't up to the standards we see from current Roco or Trident products, but useful nonetheless. What do you want for Christmas?

With Christmas not too far away maybe you can still drop a few hints to the 'nearest and dearest' and I thought I'd jot down what I reckon are among some of the best kits I have seen this year. In 1:76 scale the prize goes without doubt to CMSC and their Leyland DROPS, trailer and accessories. Others would include the revamped SdKfz 17 from Milicast with its etched brass frame aerial and again, CMSC's *Landwasserschlepper*. Slightly smaller, in 1:87 scale, Minitanks have the hard-top cab GMC 6x6 GS truck which is delightful.

Moving up to 1:35 scale, in resin-based kits Accurate Armour have to feature with their giant Faun tank transporter, Precision Models for their immaculate 21cm K38, and DES resin for their German 150cm searchlight. As for resin conversions, Cromwell Models and their SAM 6 'Gainful'. In plastic ICM have to appear with their huge Russian T35; Tamiya for being brave and finally doing the British Cromwell tank, after all these years of waiting, as well as their neat Steyr; As for Dragon, well, there is just so much to choose from. I like their railway items and also the horse-drawn infantry carts in particular.

In 1:48 scale the two that come to mind are Hart Models for their Scammell Pioneer and Gas.O.Line for their Berliet GP4 tank transporter. On a more general note, the growth in products from Eastern Europe has been interesting, and some very interesting items have appeared. ICM I've mentioned, but others include injection moulded UE carriers and an FT-17 among others. An area to watch out for in the next year or so.

Now of course this is not a full list, just the ones that came to mind from those I've seen so far this year. Euro Militaire is due soon, and I wonder what new items that will bring forth. ■

OBSERVATION POST

NEWS FOR WARGAMERS
BY STUART ASQUITH

ABOVE LEFT: British infantry at the time of the Ashanti Wars, by Castaway Arts. ABOVE RIGHT: Members of The West India Regiment, by Castaway Arts.

The Ashanti Wars

Castaway Arts (PO Box 7599, Cairns, Queensland 4870, Australia, tel/fax: (07) 4041 2079) have started a rather different range of 25mm Colonial figures. These for the Ashanti War, which offers an interesting change of scenario to colonial wargamers. So far there are 13 castings, providing a selection of British infantry, West India Regiment, Haussa infantry and native scouts. The detail on the castings is very good and I understand that opposition in the form of Ashanti warriors will be available shortly. The castings are $1.30 Australian (about 49p or 81 cents US at current exchange rates) and air freight is charged at cost. Customers can request a free list of figures by phoning or faxing.

New Italian Wars Range

Parkfield Miniatures (5 Pines Close, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 5QW) have started a range of 25mm figures for the Italian Wars 1494-1544. So far there are some Swiss and Spanish infantry, plus some Landsknechts. The figures are fairly well detailed in a true 25mm in size and thus tend towards the smaller size by today's accepted 'standards'. Pikes are not supplied and the castings are 50p each. Parkfield Miniatures have also produced a relevant title The Italian Wars 1494-1544, No. 4 in their "Notes on Uniforms and Organisation (A Wargamer's Guide)" series in support of these figures. This looks at the French, Spanish, Italian, Swiss and Imperial armies of the period, with the text concentrating more on the organisation and tactics rather than the uniform aspect.

ABOVE: Samples from the new 25mm Italian Wars Range by Parkfield Miniatures. BELOW: The steam powered river launch from Frontline Wargaming

A Foundry 25mm Landsknecht, painted by GJM Figurines.

Hungarian Csaba 39M

Chiltern World of Miniatures (1 Elmbourne Road, London SW17 8JS Tel: 0181-673 9069) is now the UK distributor for all US Casts products, including their range of 1:76 scale resin models. A sample of this series is a Csaba 39M as used by the Hungarian army in WWII. The model goes together very well, but it is suggested that the radio aerial supplied with the kit is replaced by an etched brass item, to better withstand the rigours of the war games table.

A 1:76 scale resin model of a Csaba 39M as used by the Hungarian army in WWII.

GJM Figurines

GJM Figurines, 74 Crofton Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 8HY, tel: 01689 828474 (24 hour answerphone) or 0403 522543 (mobile) offer a figure painting service. The rates for 25mm fully shaded figures are £3.95 for foot figures; £6.95 cavalry, (£2 extra per figure for heraldry); £5.95 for an artillery piece; £7.95 for a chariot; £6.95 for a wagon (draught animals £1.95 extra); £9 for an elephant. Please add 50% extra for flag bearers and £5 extra for a hand-painted flag. High class wargames standard 50% extra; showcase standard available at double the prices quoted above. GJM Figurines also offer a deluxe basing service for 30% extra, or a basic basing service at 10% extra. Showcase standard painting is also available at double these prices. Postage and packing is 15% UK, 20% overseas, please make cheques payable to Gerard Cronin. For further details, please send an ssae to the quoted address.

Out of Africa

Frontline Wargaming (Gibraltar Farm, Ham Lane, Gillingham, Kent ME7 3JJ, tel: 01634 832189) have started a very attractive and well-designed new range of 25mm scenic colonial items in polyester resin. The African Princess is a model of a steam powered river launch with a canvas awning and there is also a native dug out canoe. Additionally, a couple of useful buildings - a circular tribal hut with conical thatched roof and a rather splendid single storey, two-room, bungalow with a veranda and a detachable thatched roof. Post and packing on all orders is 10% UK, 20% Europe, 40% elsewhere. Cheques payable to T. Wade please.

Warhammer Ancient Battles

Warhammer Ancient Battles: Wargames in the Ancient World provides a complete set of rules for playing wargames set in the ancient historical world. Designed and developed by Jervis Johnson, Rick Priestley, Alan and Michael Perry, the rules are based on the Games Workshop Warhammer style, but succeed in following the historical theme, omitting dragons, witches, etc. Whilst the rules themselves seem well thought-out and are certainly set out clearly, there is also a considerable amount of additional information included in this 144, A4-page illustrated publication, which also features a 16-page colour section.

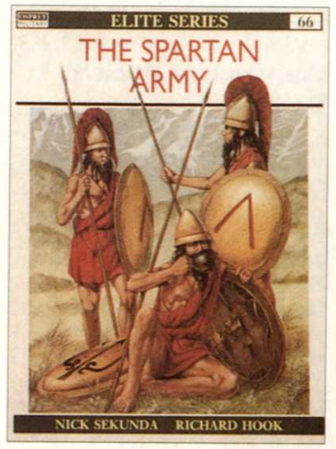
There are eight different scenarios, rules for fighting campaigns, useful tips on painting and collecting a wargames army, army lists for Romans and barbarians. *Warhammer Ancient Battles: Wargames in the Ancient World* is produced by Warhammer Historical Wargames Limited (PO Box 5226, Nottingham NG7 2WT, tel: 0115 9168296) at £15 plus £1.50 UK postage and packing, £3 Europe, £5 elsewhere. Note that the publication is not a Games Workshop product and cannot be purchased at their shops nor via their mail order department. ■

ON PARADE

BOOKS & VIDEOS REVIEWED

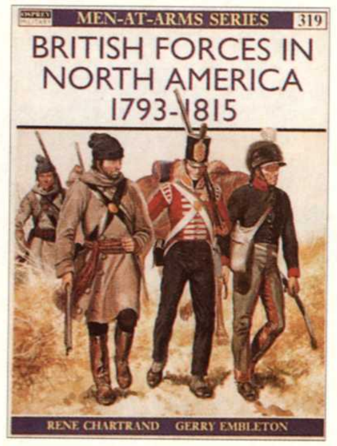
Osprey 'Men at Arms' and 'Elite' series. Osprey Publishing, Elms Court, Chapel Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9LP. 'Men at Arms' £7.99; 'Elite' £8.99.

Four new releases from Osprey, since their reorganisation, have arrived for review - three of the very popular 'Men at Arms' and one 'Elite' title.



The 'Elite' (No.66, ISBN 1-85532-659-0) is *The Spartan Army* by Nick Sekunda and illustrated by Richard Hook. The warriors of Sparta gave us a word for the English language - spartan - its meaning being that of how the fighting males of ancient Sparta, an ancient Greek city state, were thought to have been, brought up, trained and lived out their lives. This one has excellent references for modellers interested in this period and the Richard Hook artwork is always inspirational.

Men at Arms' title No.317 *Henry V and the Conquest of France 1416-53* by Paul Knight and illustrated by Graham Turner (ISBN 1-85532-699X) provides an interesting and informative introduction to this period of English history. The 15th century is a popular period for modellers - plenty of heraldic colour and armour. Graham Turner has a 'feel' for this period and his colour illustrations are very attractive.


MEN-AT-ARMS SERIES
319
BRITISH FORCES IN NORTH AMERICA 1793-1815
RENE CHARTRAND GERRY EMBLETON

The French Army 1939-45 (2) by Ian Sumner, François Vauvillier and illustrated by Mike Chappell (No.318, ISBN 1-85532-707-4). The role of the fighting 'Free French' units during WWII is adequately described by its joint authors and ably illustrated by Mike Chappell. Lots of different model figure subjects herein for an 'entirely different' WWII model figure.

No.319 is *British Forces in North America 1793-1815* by René Chartrand and illustrated by Gerry Embleton. It's often thought that the British army was totally committed to the war in the Peninsula, but they were fighting on two fronts, with their 'allies', albeit in lesser numbers, in North America. René Chartrand, as ever, is very readable and Gerry Embleton's colour artwork motivating towards producing miniature figures.

All Osprey books are available from booksellers or you can order them direct or by telephoning - 01933 443863.

K.M.J.

The Art of War of Revolutionary France 1789-1802, paddy Griffith. Greenhill Books, Park House, 1 Russell Gardens, London NW11 9NN. ISBN 1-85367-335-8. Price £20.

THE ART OF WAR OF REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE 1789-1802
PADDY GRIFFITH

The French army (or armies) before the advent of Napoleon Bonaparte was a very capable fighting machine, perhaps the best in Europe, if not the World. After the bloody French Revolution they not only succeeded in fighting a Civil War, but also successfully took on the armies of Britain, Austria, Prussia and Spain. However, until now, the following period under Bonaparte has always been given the attention of historians and this period of French history left fairly untouched.

Paddy Griffith has remedied this and presents a most readable book on the French Revolutionary armies. Highly recommended.

K.M.J.

IN SEARCH OF THE
BORDER REIVERS

In Search of the Border Reivers map. Available from Border 2000, Crag House Farm, Wasdale, Cumbria, CA19 1UE Tel: 01946 726301, Fax: 01946 26050. Price £5.70 plus £1.50 p&p.

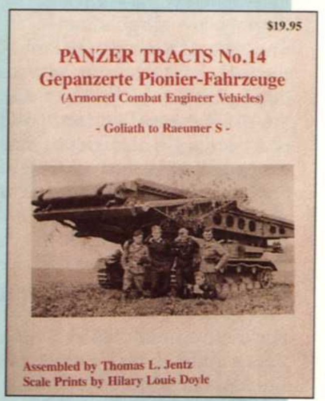
Any visitor to the Anglo-Scottish Border country who has an interest in its turbulent history will be well advised to acquire this recently published historical map. Four hundred years ago Border Reiving had reached its zenith and this troubled buffer zone between the crowns of England and Scotland rang to the clash of steel, the thunder of hooves and the scream of bloody murder.

Produced by Stuart Hepburn for Border 2000 and in association with Ordnance Survey, the full colour map details over 800 Reiver related sites, complete with Landranger references. That an enormous amount of research has gone into the project is evident in the gazetteer alone, which gives a concise description of all the major sites shown on the map and details of access where appropriate. Also included is a comprehensive timetable of Border History Events and an inset map showing the distribution of the Reiving surnames who 'shook loose the border'. Information Centres are clearly shown and a brief history of 'Reiving' is accompanied by a fine black and white illustration of an archetypal Border Reiver by Pete Armstrong.

To sum up, this is much more than just a regional map and a guide to historic sites. It is a project that will better inform those wishing to make sense of a unique moment in history which was acted out in a very special place which millions throughout the world regard as their ancestral home.

K.D.

Gepanzerte Pionier-Fahrzeuge (Armoured Combat Engineer Vehicles) - Goliath to Raumer S, Thomas L Jentz, scale prints by Hilary Louis Doyle. Darlington Publications, Inc, PO Box 5884, Darlington, Maryland 21034-5884, USA. ISBN 1-892848-00-7. Price US$19.95.


$19.95
PANZER TRACTS No.14
Gepanzerte Pionier-Fahrzeuge
(Armored Combat Engineer Vehicles)
- Goliath to Raeumer S -
Assembled by Thomas L. Jentz
Scale Prints by Hilary Louis Doyle

'Panzer Tracts Number 14' is actually the fifth of the series to appear, and gives us a very welcome reference to its subject. Those who already know Thomas Jentz's work will be aware that he draws only upon original wartime documents from German archives - no secondary sources are used, not even contemporary Allied intelligence reports, so everything here is as authoritative as could possibly be wished for.

The vehicles covered range from the *PzKpfw I* charge-layer (commonly though wrongly called the *Ladungsleger* in modern reference books) through the various radio-controlled charge-carriers to the Pioneer versions of the *SdKfz251*, the *PzKpfw II* and *PzKpfw IV*-based bridgelayers, the Alkett minefield clearer now on show at Kubinka, the monstrous Krupp articulated minefield clearer, and the *Landwasserschlepper* and *Panzerfahre* amphibians. Many of these are already available or announced as polystyrene or resin kits - the Alkett and Krupp vehicles, one of the *PzKpfw IV* bridgelayers, the *Goliath* and 'Borgward BIV', and both amphibians.

Several myths and common misconceptions are cleared up along the way, and the book is essential to students of armour for the true facts presented here. The 65 photographs have been chosen for their clarity and are accompanied by 20 scale plans from Hilary Doyle, though only those of the 'Borgward BIVb' and *Springer* charge-carriers are four-view plans, the others being simple side views.

This book is an invaluable reference for anyone planning to build any of these kits, giving the numbers built and brief details of actual service use with even the user units specified where possible, though space prohibits listing of all the users of the *SdKfz251* Pioneer vehicles. It is available in the UK from several of the specialist booksellers who advertise in ***Military Modelling.***

J.P.

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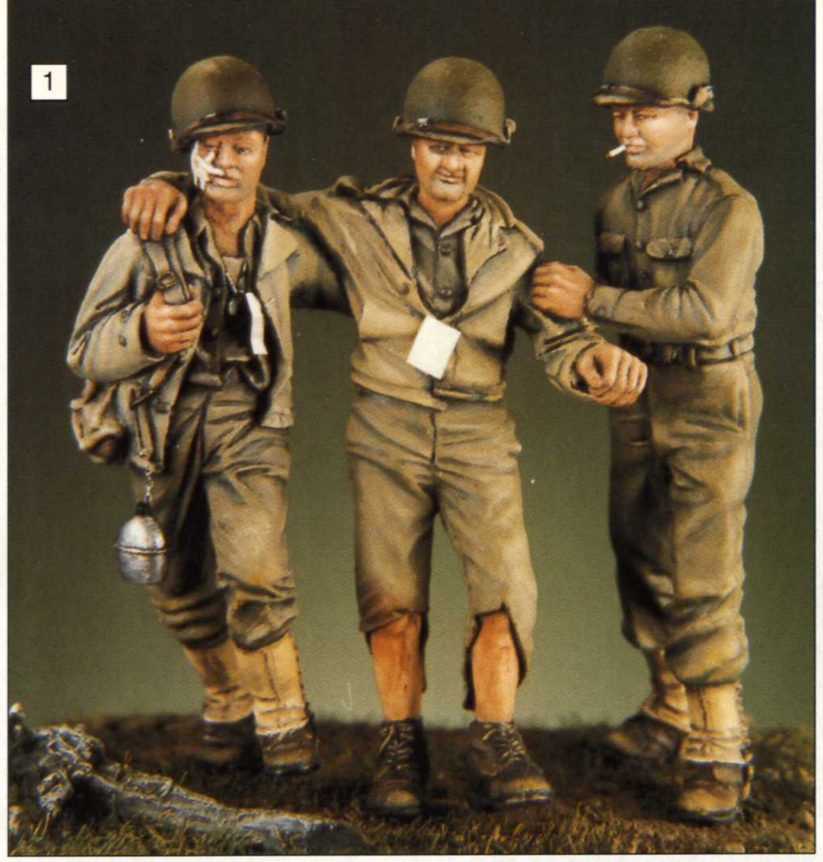

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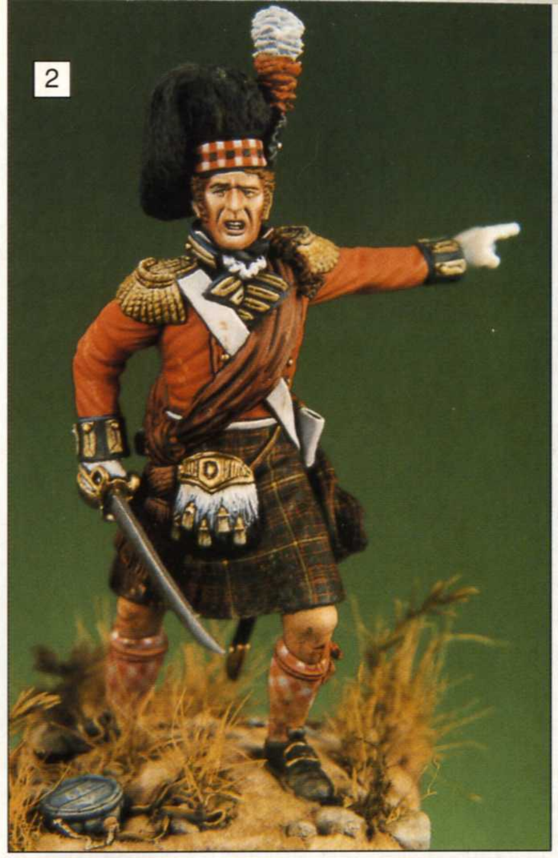

Phil Kessling reports from the bi-annual World Model Soldier Federation show held this year in Toronto, Canada

WORLD EXPO 1998

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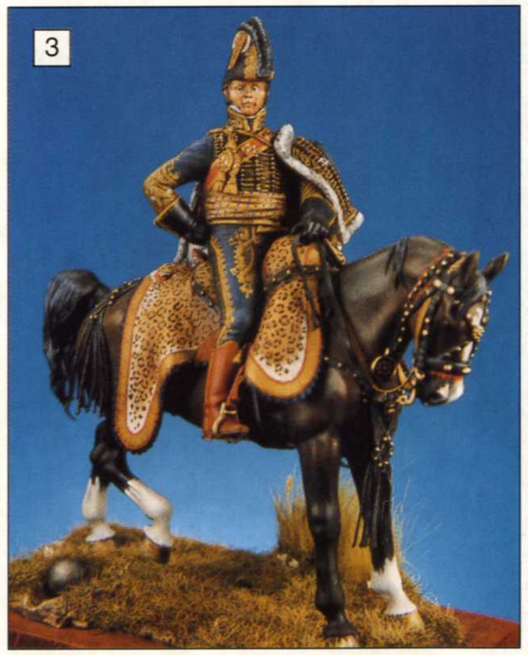

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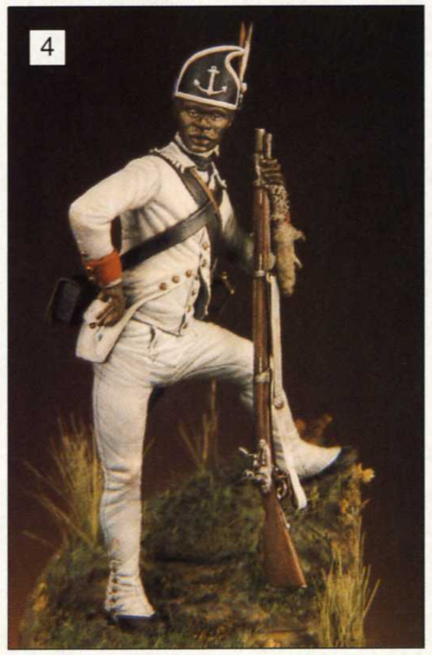

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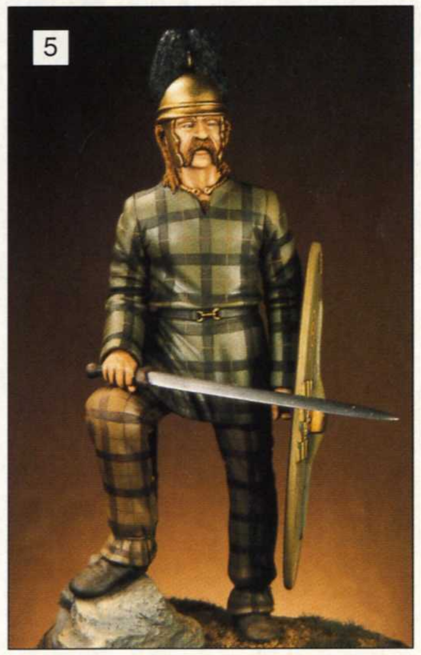
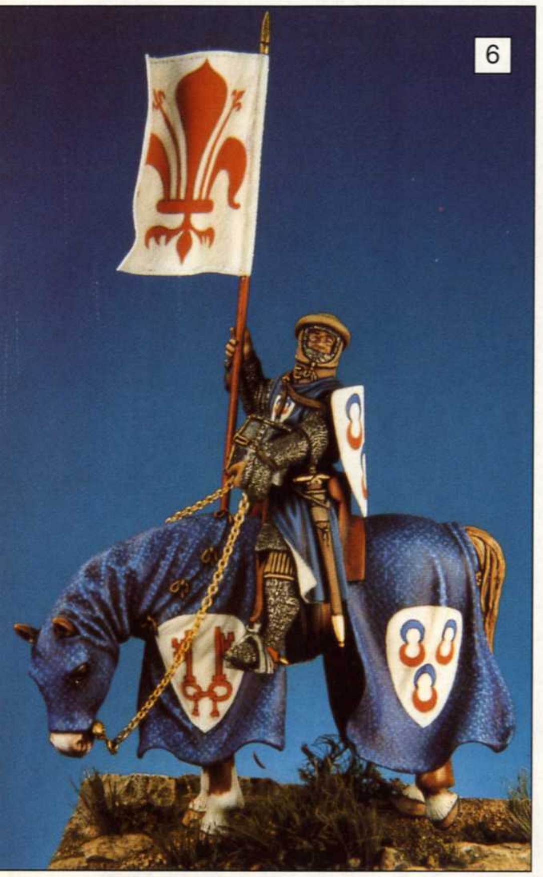


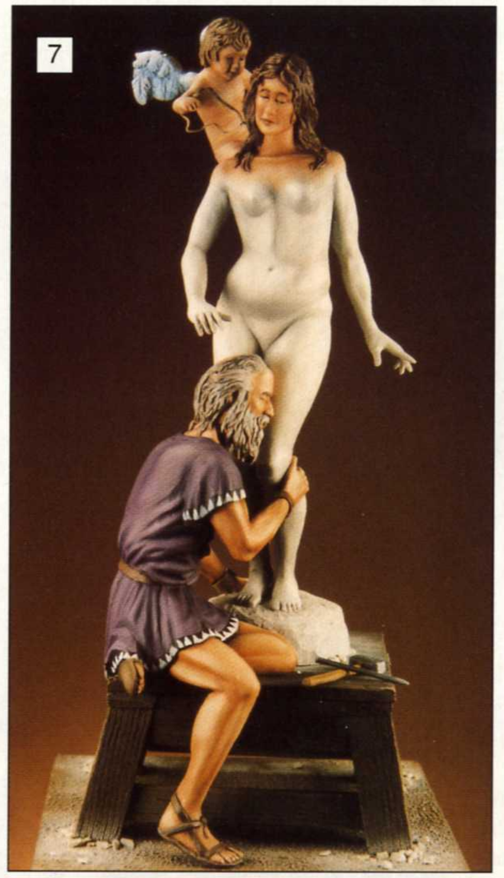
1. *"Are There Angels?" by Michael Bedard - original 54mm figures.* **2.** *Pegaso 54mm 'Officer 79th Highlanders' painted by José Gallardo.* **3.** *Ivo Preda's Conte de Charbonnet, 1810 - a Metal Modeles 54mm conversion.* **4.** *Rhode Island Infantry by Greg Di Franco- an original 54mm figure.* 5. *Gaul, 1st century BC- a Michael Roberts 150mm conversion by Mike Hall.*

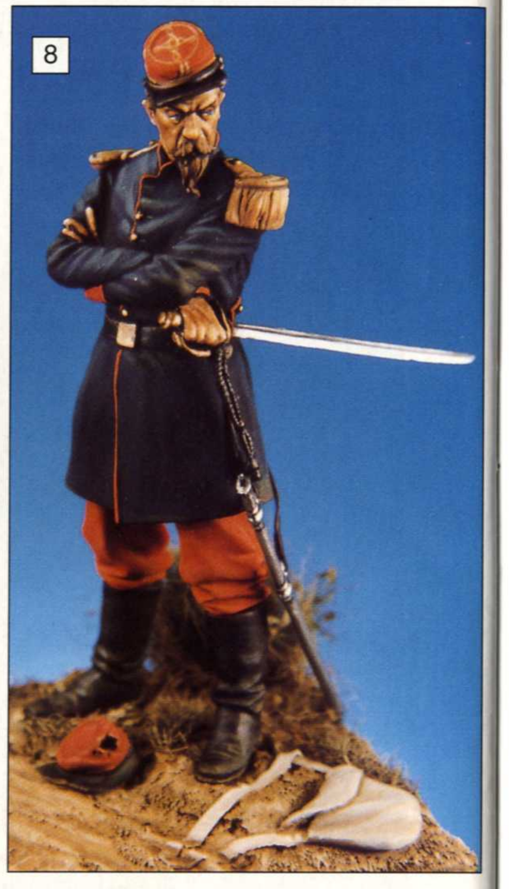
The venue for World Expo '98 was the Inn on the Park in Toronto, Canada. This luxurious hotel was located near a large wooded park and included all the necessary facilities in one location. An outdoor swimming pool and lunch area proved to be very popular with the families. One of the most obvious differences between World Expo and other major Miniature Exhibitions was the large number of families who made the trip. It was nice to finally meet the significant number of friends that I have known for years.

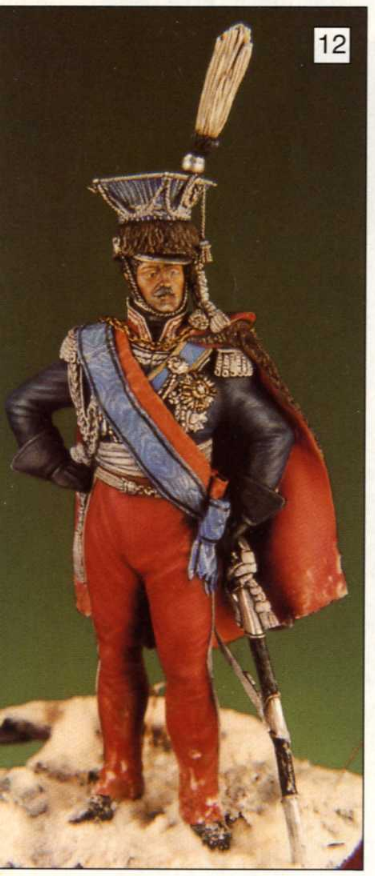
The instructional seminars offered at World Expo were extensive and covered all aspects of the hobby. Where else could you attend seminars presented by Shep Paine, Bill Horan, Mike Good, Mike Blank, Andrei Koribanics, Peter Twist, etc. This is probably the most popular feature of the World Expos and what separates them from the annual events.

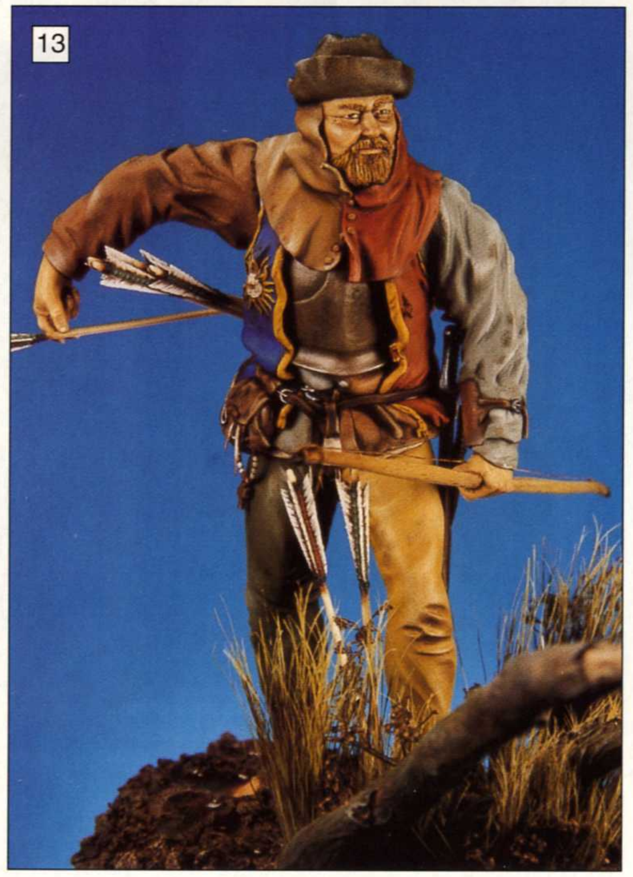
No matter how well an exhibition is planned and staged, it's ultimate success depends on the quality of the work on the tables. By this measurement, World Expo '98 was definitely world class. A welcome surprise was the large number of Italian miniaturists who attended. Their work on a whole was very creative and well painted. Medieval and Napoleonic subjects were prominent in most of their displays and particularly











impressive was the painting of intricately patterned clothing.

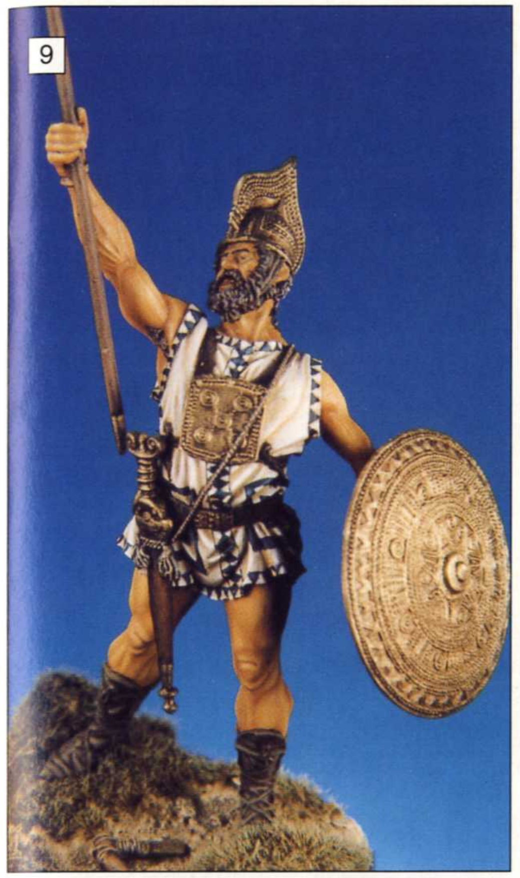
As expected at a major international show, there were numerous original figures on display. Andrei Koribanics' "Pygmalion and Galatea" was clearly a crowd pleaser. One of my personal favourites was Peter Karel's "Maiden and the Unicorn." Although neither of these pieces were mainstream subject matter, they were well conceived and conveyed emotions not normally seen in the military miniature art form.

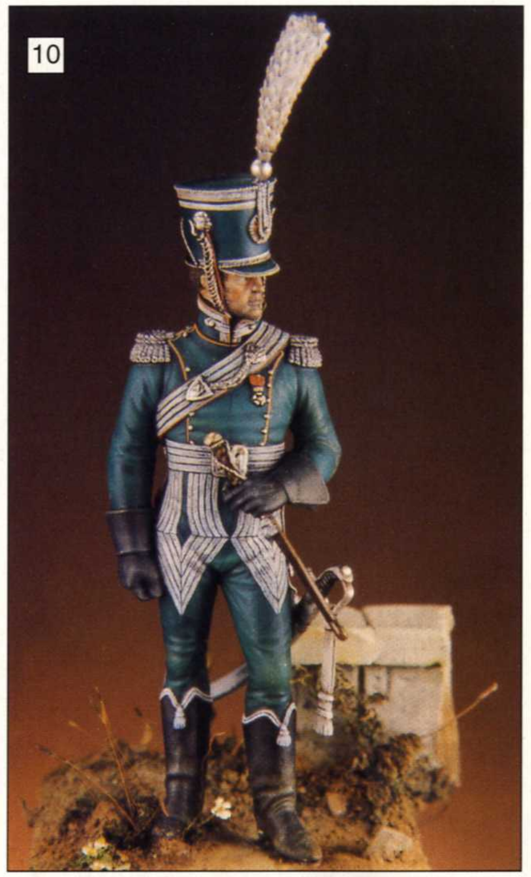
Several exhibitors had strong displays in both the Painters and Open divisions. Doug Cohen's work has always been exceptional, but is now even more dynamic and original. His "Oklahoma Dust Dance" was a very convincing blend of extreme animation and realistic painting. His "Landsknecht Doppelsoldner" was one of the best painted stock figures on display. Mike Blank is another miniaturist whose work continues to push the limits. This is hard to fathom as he has been a consistent gold medal winner for several years. His original 54mm "Alexander Nevsky" was a real gem and had everyone anxious for its release as a kit from Soldiers Lucchetti.

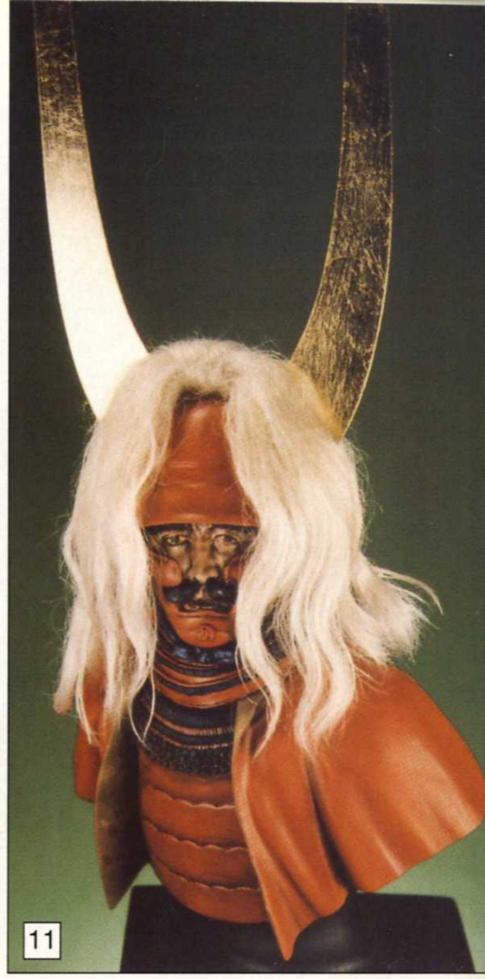
The work of Stefano and Pasquale Cannone was even better than I expected as photographs of miniatures don't always bring out the nuances of the painting. It was hard to select a favourite, as all of their work was exceptional. However, I thought their "Kolburg Fusilier" was very original.

Seeing Mario Venturi's original Medieval figures was also a treat, as this is one of my favourite historical periods. The work of Pietro Balloni could not be overlooked. His "Attila" and "Portuguese Knight" were two examples of his very detailed pattern painting. Ivo Preda and Claudio Signanini both had displays of creative Napoleonic conversions. Two of the best painters in the world, José Gallardo and Jésus Gamarra had impressive displays of their work.

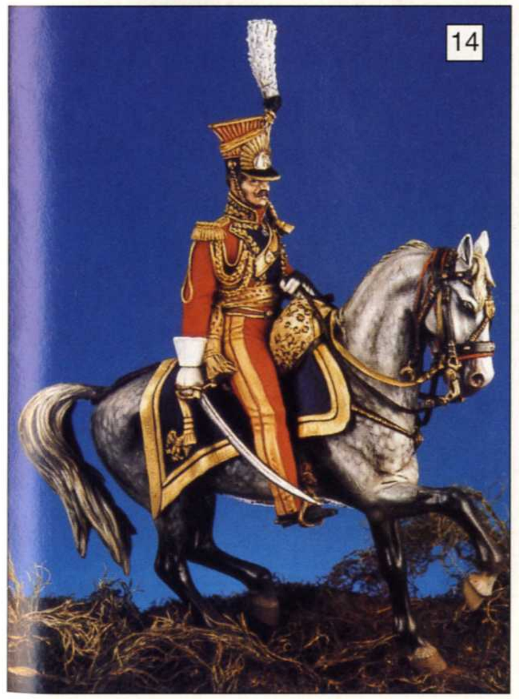
Exceptional flat painting skills were demonstrated by several exhibitors. Rick Taylor displayed his original flat of "Mona Lisa." Ron Rudat and Mike Taylor both displayed impeccable versions of the "Alice in Wonderland" set, designed by Mike Taylor. Two framed sets by Ron Rudat were eye-catching and very popular.

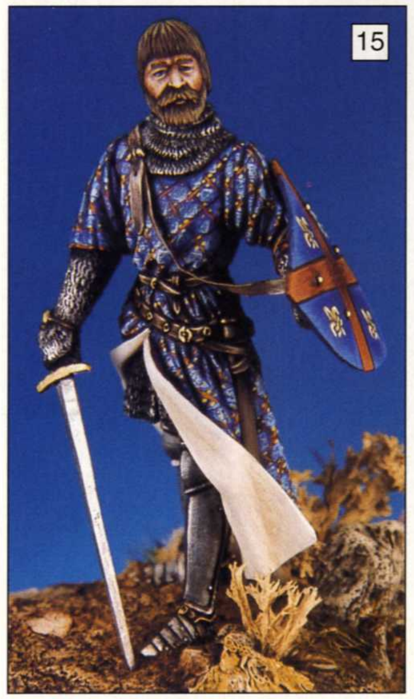


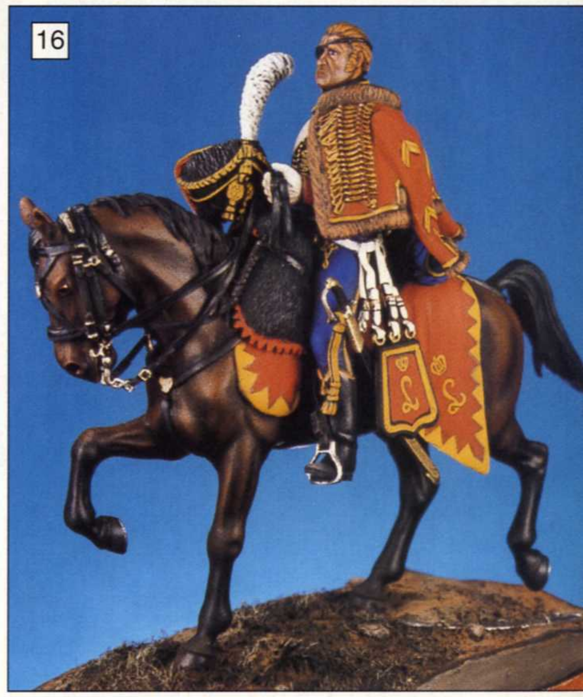




6. Jacopo del Nacca Pazzi, 1260 by Mario Venturi - a 54mm original mounted figure. 7. Pygmalion and Galatea - a 100mm original creation by Andrei Koribanics. 8. French Infantry Officer c.1859 - a 54mm original and a joint modelling and painting effort by Stefano and Pasquale Cannone. 9. Villanovan by Piero Forconi - a Miles 54mm stock figure. 10. Colonel Marbot, 1813 - a Metal Modeles' 54mm conversion by Claudio Signanini. 11. Li Naomasa an original 200mm samurai bust by Augie Rodriguez. 12. Poniatowski by Claudio Signanini - a Le Cimier 54mm figure conversion. 13. "English Bowman" - a 120mm original figure by Stan Cheffey. 14. Colbert by Francesco Tertizzi - a 54mm conversion. 15. Portuguese Knight - a Pegaso 54mm figure conversion by Pietro Balloni. 16. Dutch Hussar - a Metal Modeles 54mm conversion by Mario Mefistofele.

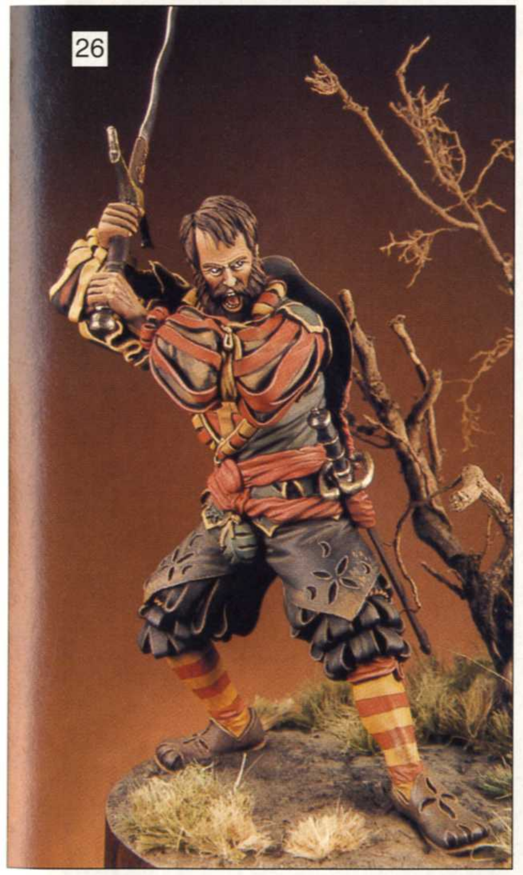






One was a boxed scene of wolves attacking a mounted Scottish Highlander. The other was "The Four Seasons," painted in beautiful pastel tones. Bianca Mussini's display of original flats sculpted by her husband, Alberto, was stunning. Inspired by Italian Masters, her work was a faithful representation of their styles and palettes.

It was nice to see that several miniaturists selected unusual subjects for their projects. Greg DiFranco displayed an original 54mm of a "Rhode Island Infantryman;" dressed in an all white uniform. An "Abyssinian Court Official" was a very colourful original by Jeff Fisher. Stan Cheffey displayed an original liveried "English Bowman" from the War of the Roses. "Stradiotti" was a very colourful and action packed mounted figure by Fletcher Clements. Colin Frasier exhibited a strikingly uniformed French Hussar



17. *'Hasta la Victoria' by Stefano De Paolis - an Andrea Miniatures' 54mm stock figure.* **18**. *Thistle Miniatures' 70mm, 42nd Highlander by Bob Howe.* **19**. *Robert Hoffman's Scythian King - a Pegaso 54mm figure.* **20**. *US Tanker by Steven Brown - Verlinden Productions' 200mm bust.* **21**. *Turkish Jannisary by Michael Volquarts - a Pegaso 90mm figure.* **22**. *"Ludovicio il Moro" by Wladimiro Corte - a Miles 54mm stock figure.* **23**. *"Deep into Russia" Mike Blank's 120mm original Viking.* **24**. *Russian Cossack, 1812 - a 54mm conversion by Mariano Numitone.* **25**. *Lee's Partisan Legion by Peter Culos - a 54mm conversion.* **26**. *Warrior's 120mm Landsknecht painted by Doug Cohen.* **27**. *Aquila 90mm Celtic Chief by Don Weeks.* **28**. *Bill Horan's Berdan Sharpshooter - a 54mm conversion.*

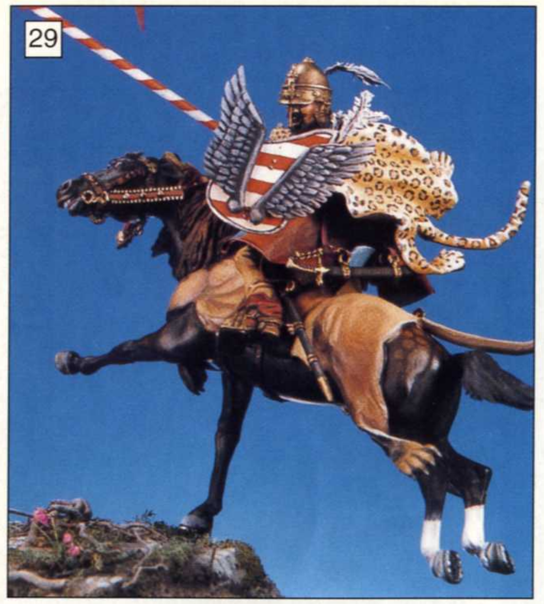
General "Fournier."

World Expo '98 saw the resurgence of the boxed diorama. Dave Browne displayed his recently completed "Stalingrad" diorama. It depicted a German infantry squad in a mountain of urban rubble. Dennis Levy presented a box depicting a group of Prussian Infantryman using a church as a defensive position. The scene was from the Franco-Prussian War, a period which seem to be getting more attention from miniaturists and manufacturers.

As expected in a show of this calibre, the Best of Show selection was very difficult. In fact, the voting was so close that a runner-up was announced. The runner-up was Emmanuel Valerio's original "Mounted Samurai." These two large-scale and highly animated figures made for a striking display. However, the popular choice for Best of Show was Nick Infield's "We'll Always Have Paris." This boxed diorama depicted the filming of the last scene from the classic movie *Casablanca*. It included a complete production staff with equipment. Of course, the focal point was Humphrey Bogart. The applause was deafening as a surprised Nick Infield accepted his award.

World Expos are always a little disconcerting for the organisers. Since there is no previous "Show Reputation" to draw on, the organisers have to rely on extensive publicity and a lot of hard work to promote the venue. It's ultimate success depends on the attendees. Everyone I talked to at the Expo had a great time. The venue was near perfect, the organisation was near flawless and the exhibits were world class. It was a show that will linger in the memories of miniaturists for a long time.

Make your own memories at World Expo 2000, to be held in Glasgow, Scotland. ▶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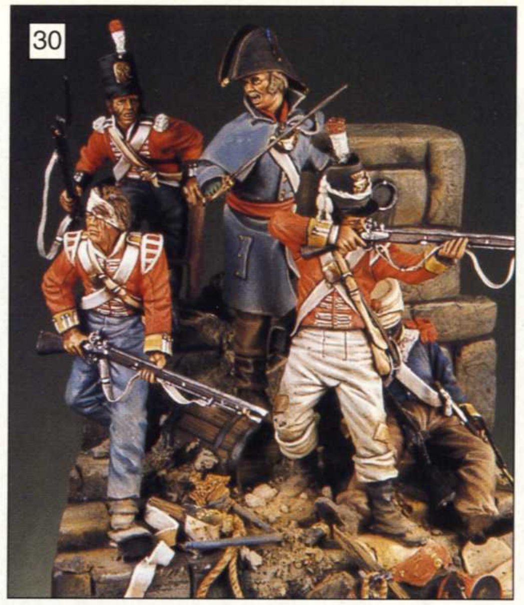
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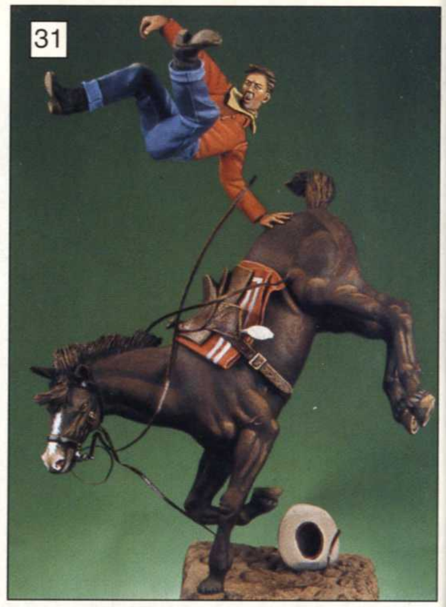
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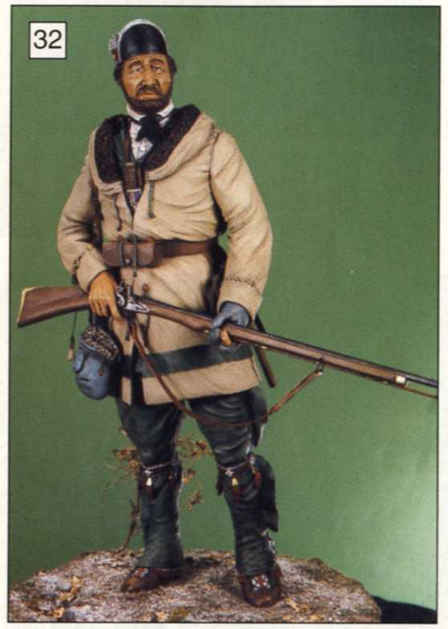
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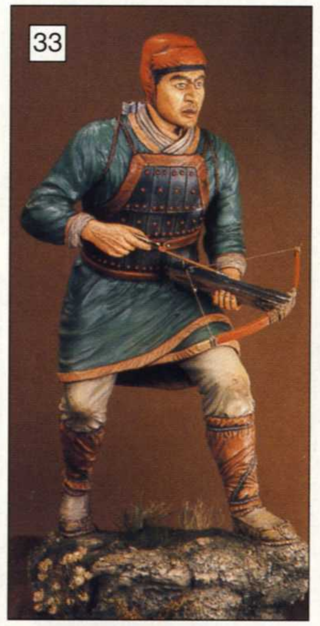
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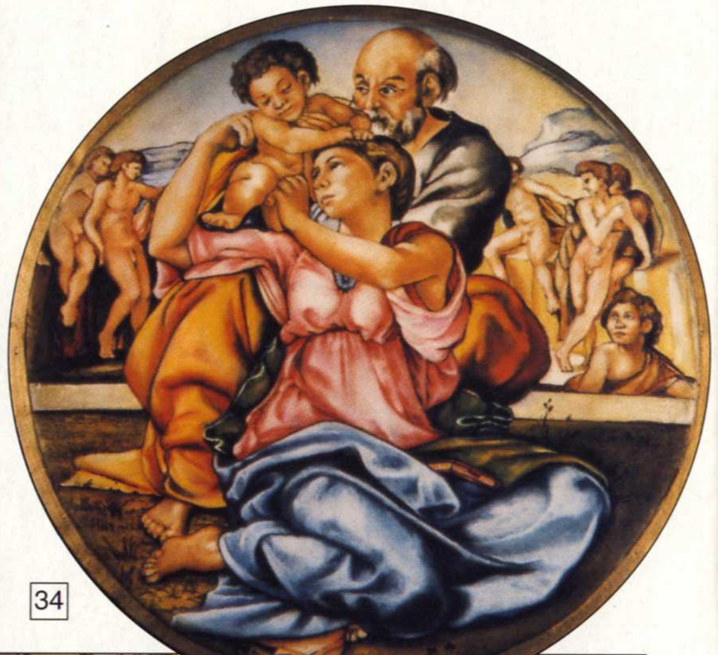
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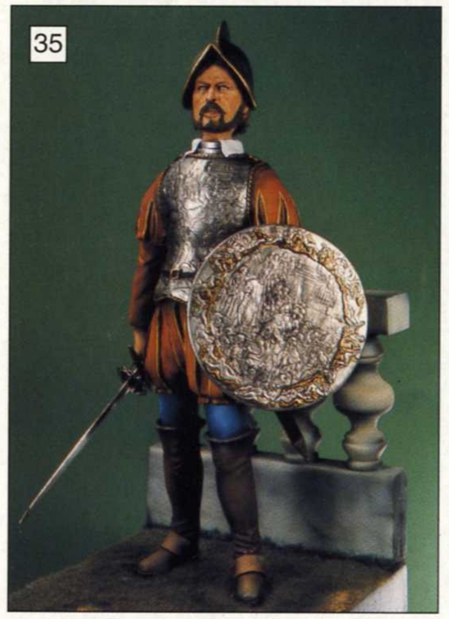
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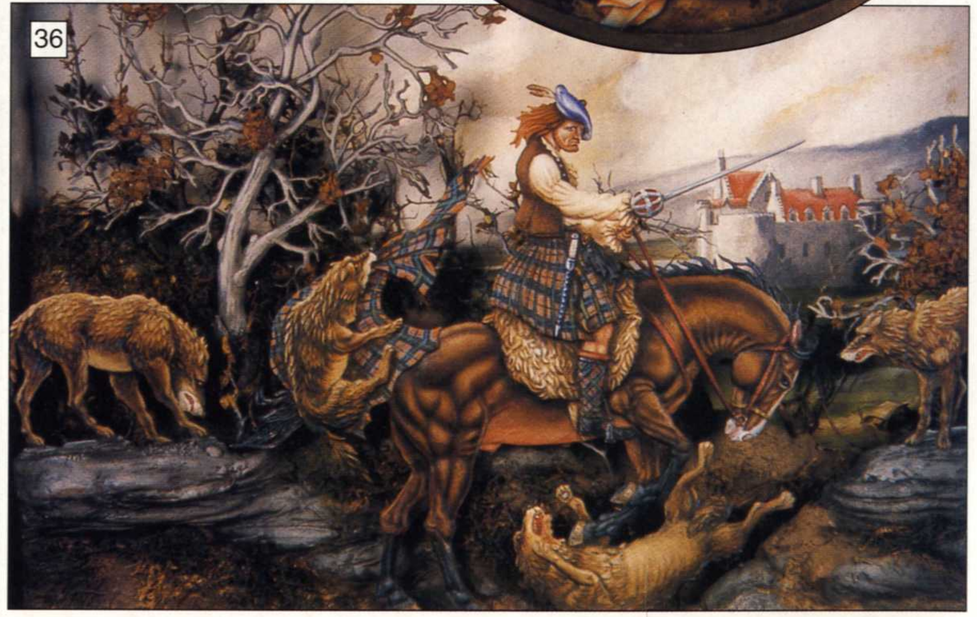
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29. *Stradiotti by Fletcher Clement - a 54mm conversion.* **30**. *"The Storming of Badajos" by Nello Rivieccio - 54mm original figures in a diorama.*
31. *"Oklahoma Dust Dance" - Doug Cohen's 54mm conversion.* **32**. *Rogers' Rangers c.1758 - a 200mm original figure by David Ackerman.*
33. *Chinese Han Dynasty Soldier a 200mm original by Vincent Wei. (Now available as a kit from him at Alpha Image Inc., Model Workshop, 339 Bristol Road East, Mississauga, Ontario L4Z 3V6, Canada).* **34**. *"Tondo Doni" an original flat figure scene by Alberton and Bianca Mussini.*
35. *Rick Taylor's 154mm original figure of a 16th century Spanish Officer.* **36**. *"Wolves" - a 75mm flat by Ron Rudat.*

ATTEN-SHUN!

The Editor welcomes product samples for review which should be sent to Military Modelling Magazine, PO Box 6017, LEIGHTON BUZZARD LU7 7FA. Unless a prior arrangement has been made with the Editor, review samples will not be returned.

NEW PRODUCTS REVIEWED

U.S.M8 LIGHT ARMORED CAR
GREYHOUND
1/35 MILITARY MINIATURE SERIES No.228
M8
M8 グレイハウンド
TAMIYA

Tamiya

The latest 1:35 scale kit from Tamiya is the M8 Greyhound armoured car. This speedy six-wheeler was conceived in 1941 as a fast tank destroyer, but it became obvious that its 37mm gun was inadequate for that role. However, its speed and mobility made it a very good reconnaissance vehicle and over 8,500 were built and used by US, British, French and other armies - in fact, it was the British who named it the Greyhound. It continued to serve post-War and can still be found in some armies and police forces today.

Tamiya's kit follows their now-established design philosophy in using a one-piece transmission shaft/axle unit to which the smaller parts are fixed. This makes assembly a great deal simpler and quicker than in older kits with individual shafts and axles! The chassis in this kit is moulded as part of the lower hull and the separate springs have firm locations to it, so getting all four wheels to touch the 'ground' is about as easy as it could possibly be.

Once all the suspension parts are in place you can turn the model right-side-up, and here the real fun begins. Complete, and acceptably accurate, fighting and driving compartment and turret interiors are provided, with separate hatches for all areas including the engine - even the petrol filler cap hatch is separate, with detail below it. As well as full tool stowage there's a choice of stowage bins or mine racks for the hull sides, and the front and rear mudguards can be fitted or left off - many Greyhounds had them removed to stop mud building up on bad going. There's also a choice of position for the flexible Browning .50 cal machine-gun on the turret top, with both the early single mount at the turret rear and the later M36 gun ring being provided. Not much is left to the after-market, though etched brass sets can be expected by those who prefer to replace polystyrene light guard, etc., and the open option for the engine hatches is a clear invitation for a resin engine set to appear. Perhaps Tamiya is planning to produce an engine maintenance set as they did for their Panther and Tiger kits?

Markings are given for four identified US Army vehicles and one in French service, and all appear accurate. The piece de resistance here is the provision of the engine deck star as three individual sections to help it fit over the air vents of the deck - Tamiya has been listening to modellers' complaints of the problems in fitting decals over high-relief details!

My verdict? Get the kit and enjoy building it, even if armoured cars or non-German vehicles aren't your interest this one's too good to miss!

I obtained my kit by mail order from Japan, but it should be in all good UK model shops by the time you read this - for example,. F&S Scale Models, 227 Droylsden Road, Audenshaw, Manchester M34 5ZT, tel/fax: 0161 370 3235 have it advertised at £15.99.

Tamiya models are imported into the UK by Richard Kohnstam, 13-15a High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 3AD.

J.P.

Price: in text
Tamiya Plastic Model Co., 3-7 Ondawara, Shizuoka-City, Japan.

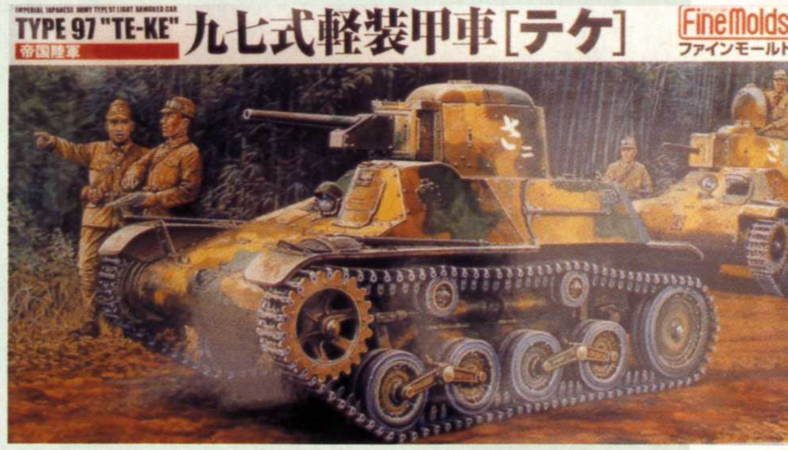
Fine Molds

You may remember that a few years ago Fine Molds produced some rather nice 1:35 scale white metal kits of Japanese light tanks. Few of these were imported to the UK, and the prices of those which did get here were high, so most modellers didn't have the chance to build them. They've now been re-issued in polystyrene at much more reasonable prices and, though they're only available in Japan, mail order from there has become quite straightforward so why not give them a try this time around?

I bought kit FM10, the Type 97 *Te-Ke* tankette with 37mm gun, and found it to be a very nice little model. It has a very complete fighting compartment interior, with full driver's position, transmission, firewall including the engine front and comprehensive turret details - not just the gun breech but ammo racks and vision block internal parts as well as delicate parts for all hatch hold-open struts. Even a partial engine is provided and can be seen through two posable hatches! This all comes on four olive plastic sprues plus one in light grey for the internal parts, which also gives two standing crew figures. In addition there's a fret of etched steel for the mesh shield over the exhaust, the trackguard supports and various other tiny parts.

The tracks come as separate links on another eight sprues, but include pairs and triple links as well - though oddly enough flexible tracks are shown in the instruction diagrams. The instructions are, of course, in Japanese but parts placement is plainly indicated and all colours are captioned in English. The decal sheet gives markings for several tanks from units which are identified in English on the instruction sheet, and a camouflage diagram gives Gunze Sangyo and Tamiya paint mixes for the necessary colours.

In addition to all this there are several bonuses! Parts are included to build the machine-gun armed tankette (though this has no breech for its gun and only the 37mm ammo racks are given) and this version gets a supplementary instruction sheet and separate decals for units identified in English. The piece de resistance is a double page of sketches showing lots of extra internal detail which the terminally detail-afflicted could add - and although the text to this is in Japanese most of the called-out items are also captioned in English!

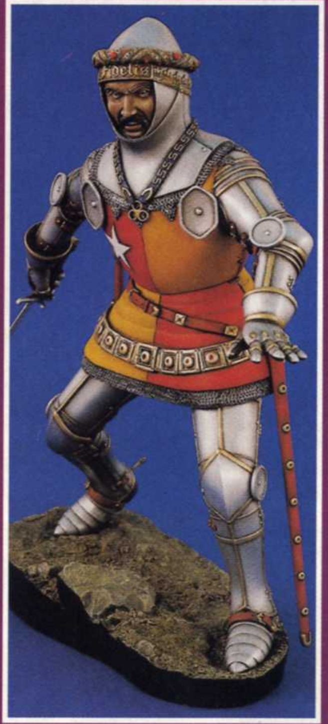

TYPE 97 "TE-KE"
九七式軽装甲車[テケ]
帝国陸軍
FineMolds
ファインモール

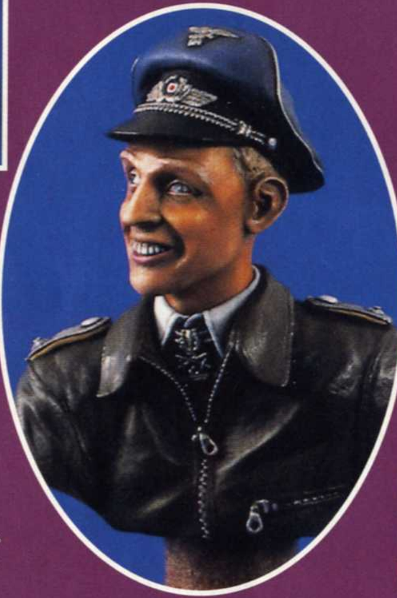
I'm full of enthusiasm for this little kit - about my only criticism is that the driver's front and side visors aren't separate parts to allow them to be left open, though his hatch is separate and of course the interior can be viewed by simply removing the turret. Heartily recommended for all lovers of something different why not perch it on the back of a Sherman in US Marine markings to reproduce a well-known photograph!

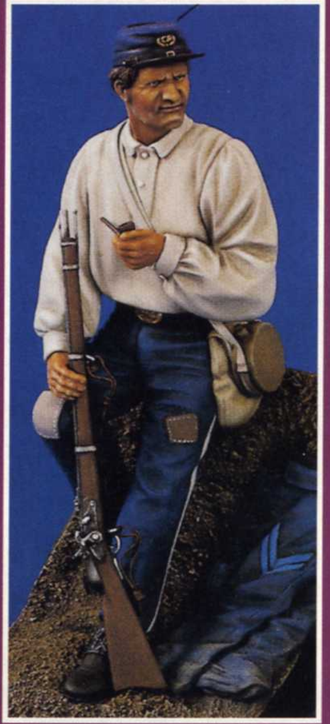
J.P.

Price: ¥3,500
Fine Molds, 53-2 Aza-Matoba Oitsu-cho, Toyahashi, Japan 441-3301. The review kit was bought from Hobby Link Japan by mail order at 3,500 yen (cheaper than you'd think but check the press for current exchange rates) plus postage (which varies according to your choice of method). Hobby Link Japan is moving but by the time you read this will be at Tatebayashi-shi, Nishitakane-cho 43-6, Gunma 374-0075, Japan, tel: 81 276 803068, fax: 81 276 80 3067. Those on the Web can order through their website at http://iac.co.jp/~hlj.

Verlinden Productions







September's releases from Verlinden Productions bring quite a mixture and good variety of products in different scales. - a Giant 200mm figure kit, a 200mm bust, one Super Scale 120mm figure kit, three 1:35 scale figure kits and one accessory kit, a set of 1:48 scale figure kits and 1:48 aircraft conversion kit, and finally a 1:3 'zombie!' quite an impressive line up.

Star of the month's releases has to be the Giant 200mm figure kit of Richard de Vere Earl of Oxford (1373 £39.95 + 50p p&p). It's the 'rest' of the 200mm bust released last April as kit 1326. One wonders will the other Verlinden 200mm busts get their bodies?

The kit, superbly well cast in polyurethane resin, has Richard de Vere in a kind of 'on guard' or 'at bay' pose, wearing plate armour and surcoat in his colours - red and yellow with a white star, the latter being in relief on the quarters. The model is based on the figure over Sir Richard's tomb in St. Stephen's Chapel at Bures in Suffolk. A super model to practice metal painting skills upon. Watch the sword blade and scabbard, however, because such thin resin castings easily become bent or curved. Straighten these out in hot water or hot air from a hairdryer. Potential for conversion on this kit is good and you may find buying more than one to ring the changes. It would made an excellent present assembled and painted to someone who can't paint miniatures, but who does appreciate a good model figure. Food for thought as Christmas approaches.

The 200mm bust (1372 £13.95 + 50p p&p) cast in resin is a fair likeness of Erich Hartmann, the top-scoring fighter pilot of all time. There's a good attempt at Hartmann's distinctively 'effected' service cap with its severe backward sweep. His youthful features (Hartmann was known to his comrades as *Bube* - boy or 'baby') are quite well captured. he wears a leather jacket so the bust offers a good 'adventure painting session' as far as textures are concerned, this has the lot! A cast resin pillar base is included in the kit

For 1:35 scale modellers there's three figure kits and an 'update' kit for Tamiya's *Wespe* to choose from. The driver's compartment of the Wespe (1379 £12 + 50p p&p) receives the detail treatment with a floor, transmission housing and firewall, seat, instrument panel, plus all the little bits and pieces needed to fill out the area. A printed and illustrated instruction leaflet is provided which tells how the parts should be set up and this should be followed closely. There's certainly sufficient here to make the driver's compartment appear positively crowded when viewed through his opened hatches.

The 1:35 scale figure kits are 'At the Roadside WWII' (1371 £12.95 + 50p p&p) which has two German soldiers intended to be posed leaning against a vehicle, wall, structure, etc. Take care in getting the angle of the feet correct in relation to the angles of the bodies.

'To Safety' is a three-figure set (1377 £15.95 + 50p p&p) of two German soldiers helping a wounded comrade. After removal of resin plugs from the parts assembly isn't difficult, but neither is it easy. The upper body parts of the 'supporters' have the arms of the wounded man cast in *situs*, so try a lot of dry runs before you commit yourself to the glue! This is a complicated pose and can look awkward if not correctly assembled, but very effective when it is!

'German Infantry and Tank Officer, Battle of the Bulge' (1380 £12.95 + 50p p&p) is just as the title suggests. These are 'straight up and down' figures - excellent for posing around (and in) vehicles or dioramas. They, like all VP 1:35 scale figures, offer excellent conversion potential. Weapons and equipment are included.

The Super Scale 120mm (only one this month!) is an addition to VP's North and South American Civil War range - a Corporal 5th Georgia Infantry 'Clinch Rifles' Confederate States of America (1375 £22.50 + 50p p&p). This figure has a good, relaxed pose, smoking his pipe, sitting on banked earth -the cast scenic base for which is provided. Depressions for his boots are cast into the base ensuring they, and the legs, line up correctly - but, as always, allow plenty of dry runs to get it correct. A neat touch is the corporal's tunic cast integrally with the resin scenic base. It is a well-designed kit that also offers quite a lot of conversion potential and not just centred in the American Civil War - a British soldier in the Indian Mutiny springs to mind.

Two 1:48 scale WWII Luftwaffe pilots and a ground crewman (1374 £8.95 + 50p p&p), cast in polyurethane resin, can be adapted by AFV modellers in this scale. The pilots are cast in their seats and intended to fit into 1:48 scale aircraft cockpits while the groundcrew member (good conversion potential here) comes in kit form and could be posed on an aircraft or vehicle. For 1:48 aircraft modellers an update kit of resin and etched metal parts (1378 £19.94 + 50p p&p) to detail Accurate Miniatures 1:48 scale WWII Douglas SBD 'Dauntless' giving 1-2-3 and early A-24 options - quite an extensive kit of parts and ideal for super detailers.

Finally 'The Zombie' (1376 £13.95 + 50p p&p) is just that a 1:3 scale head - virtually a skull with the skin peeling off! One hesitates to remove the mould part line on the back just in case it's part of the rot that has set in on this poor unfortunate creature. Strangely enough, quite a few modellers I know (and tongue firmly in cheek - used to know!) have expressed a wish to paint this monstrous miniature! Strictly for fantasy and Michael Jackson *Thriller* fans! Or just an 'escape' paint job!

Verlinden Productions are available in the UK from Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ.

K.M.J.

Prices in text

Verlinden Productions, The VLS Corporation, Lone Star Industrial Park, 811 Lone Star Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366 USA. Tel: (314) 281 5700. Fax: (314) 281 5750. Internet address: http://www.vls-vp.com
email: vlsmo1@i1.net

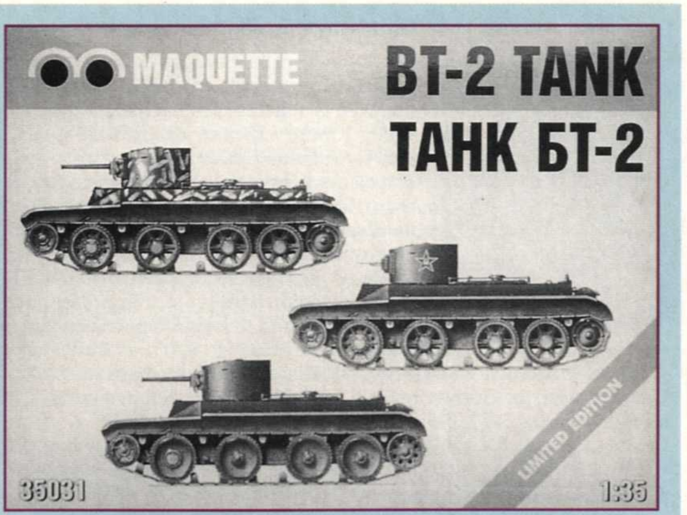
Maquette

The Soviet light tank BT-2 has been released as a limited edition 1:35 scale injection moulded plastic kit by Russian manufacturer Maquette. Kit 35031 was sent to us for review, by Pol Models, 64 Cumberland Road, Acton, London W3 6EY who have very, very limited stocks of this limited edition kit. First come, first served!

To produce the early version of gun and machine-gun armed BT-2, Maquette have obtained the BT 'bits' of a Zvezda BT kit vintage 1992! Mould sharing is also rife with Russian manufacturers, or so it seems. Extra sprues for cast spoked roadwheels and the turret are (presumably Maquette) added to make it possible to produce three different BT-2 types differing in roadwheels, sprockets and armament. Not difficult when you consider the standardisation of Soviet WWII tank parts simply copied for the 1990s by Russian kit manufacturers. The instruction sheet provides a good historical background, with production figures for the type and the box top shows the variants possible from this kit. Zvezda's tooling is slightly more refined (gates and sprue runners are smaller) than Maquette's. A sprue for injection moulded link and length plate tracks is included, thankfully with mould pin release points on the runners leaving the track links devoid of any depressions.

Assembly is fairly straightforward, but care is needed with the hull being made up from single plates - double-skinned sides, on with moulded on spring and suspension arm detail, bottom, top and nose plates which must be square. There are no single part hulls in current Russian injection moulded plastic kits, you build up the hull as you'd scratch build it from plastic sheet - or whatever.

The cylindrical rivetted turret is a basic three-piece item comprising two sides and top with



mantlet parts and armament. Choose either a 45mm gun and ball mounted 7.62mm DT machine-gun or twin 7.62mm DT machine-guns with which approximately half the type were armed. You can add extra detail to this model and replace parts with more refined 'bits' built up from plastic card and etched brass.

K.M.J.

Price: £16.95

Maquette Ltd., 115573
Orekhovy Blvd 391-143,
Moscow, Russia.

The New Model Soldier Shop Painting Service

A painting service is offered by Darren E. Beachill who has been painting wargames and miniature figures to contracts in the USA and Europe for the The New Model Soldier Shop over the past four years. Darren assembles and paints 54mm figures for £25 and 90mm for £39, the cost of the figure is extra. A detailed price list of the painting service is available be sending a sae to The New Model Soldier Shop. The shop stocks Tradition, Sarum, Andrea, Pegaso, Mountford Miniatures, Historex, Verlinden and others with a national and international mail order service with credit card facilities. Examples of Darren's work are reproduced here.

K.M.J.

The New Model Soldier Shop, 93 Chesterfield Road, Sheffield, S8 0RN.
Tel: 01142 555545/01709 326660.

Old Glory Distribution Service

Based in Bergamo Italy, Old Glory Distribution Service have sent us a sample of the Triumph range of 54mm white metal kits of mounted Renaissance period knights at the tournament, c.1500. There are four models in the range; GT-H01 Standard Bearer of Stiria in Maximilian armour; GT-H02 German Knight; GT-H03 Welsh Knight; GT-H04 Italian Knight. Each figure kit costs 110,000 lira with GT-H01 at 115,000 lira.

The white metal castings of the sample kit show very good detail; it's sharp where it needs to be and soft for the material covering of the barded horse. Assembly is not difficult, being along conventional lines, however, filler will be needed around the joins of horse halves and where the head fits the body casting. Otherwise, the fit of parts elsewhere, after cleaning up presents no problems. A cast scenic display base is provided for mounting the completed figure on.

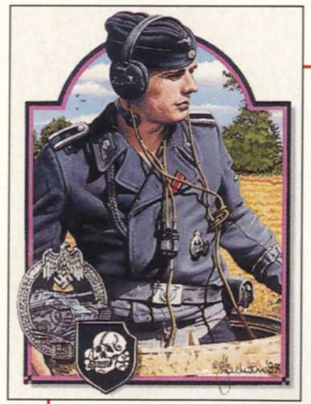
Colour instructions for painters is given on the kit slip (English captions) but the information slip is in Italian only, which is a pity because it provides historical background to the kit subject.

The models are signed limited editions, designed by Luca Stefan Cristini, General Manager of Glory Models, who is also Managing Editor of *Soldatini* - the Italian magazine. Glory Distribution Service and Glory are trademarks of Luca's Miniatures.

K.M.J.

Prices in text

Glory Models, Old Glory Distribution Service, Via padre Davide 7, 24050 Zanica (BG) Italy.
Tel/fax: (00) 39 34 670480.
Internet: http://www.mediacom.it/lucas
email: lucas@mediacom.it



Insignia Cards

Insignia cards are full colour postcards (they can be used as such if required) measuring 105mm x 150mm with military subjects - soldiers and vehicles painted by Tony Jackson printed on 260gms coated art board, finished with a light gloss. Some of the illustrations will be recognised from the often quite well-known photographs they are based on. However, in addition to the main illustration badges and insignia are also included and there is a caption on the reverse of the card.

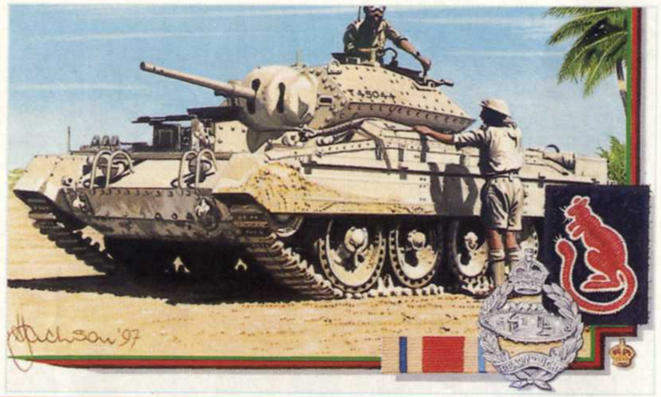
Sets No.5 'Combat Vehicles of WWII' and No.6 'Duty, Honour, Country' were received for review. Each set has eight different cards - set five featuring *SdKfz 223*, *PzKpfw V Panther*, LVT (A)-4, M-24 Chaffee, Cromwell, Crusader, *PzKpfw I* and M3 half-track. Individual soldiers in Set No.6 are *SS Unterscharführer*, *Fallschirmjäger*, US 82nd Airborne Officer, US Marine, Commando Bren Gunner, Foreign Legion *Sous Officier*, Soviet Guards Tank Army and a Japanese Naval Paratrooper. Varied subjects, indeed!

Each set of cards costs £6 in the UK which includes postage and packing. Rest of the World is £7 or US $12 - payment in Sterling or Dollars only.

K.M.J.

Prices in text

Tony Jackson & Associates, 'Forge View', Lindsey Tye, Suffolk IP7 6PP - tel: 01449 741609 or fax: 01449 741805



Modelkasten

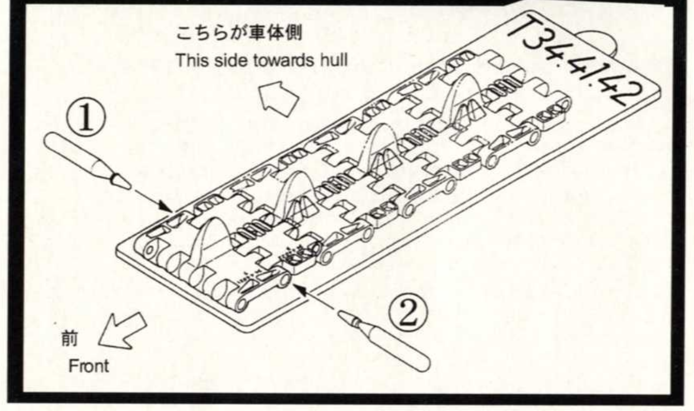
Modelkasten tracks are now available from Accurate Armour's subsidiary company, Armour Distribution, since the closure of Brian Sherriff who was the UK distributor for many years. Armour Distribution now have the full range of Modelkasten tracks and accessories in stock.

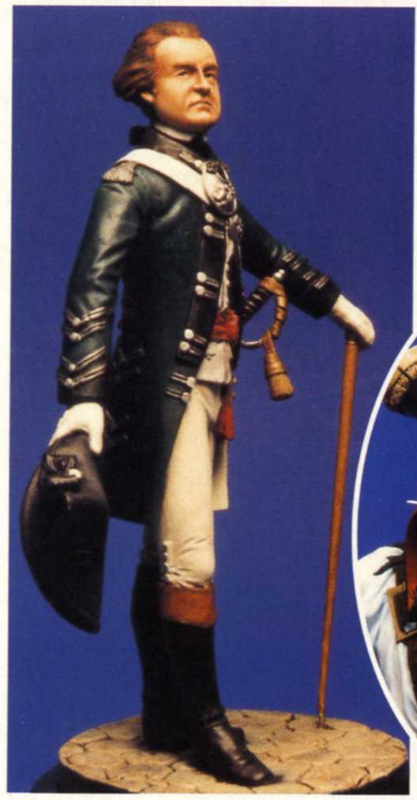
Modelkasten replacement tracks are injection moulded plastic and the latest types, the SK range, are fully articulated and 'working'. They are assembled, usually, on the plastic jig supplied, into the desired lengths by inserting a plastic pin. The carrier is then removed leaving the pin in place to provide a hinge for the track links. This is explained by the accompanying illustration reproduced from the instruction sheet included in the set of T-34.M41 tracks (SK-35) one of the latest additions to the range.

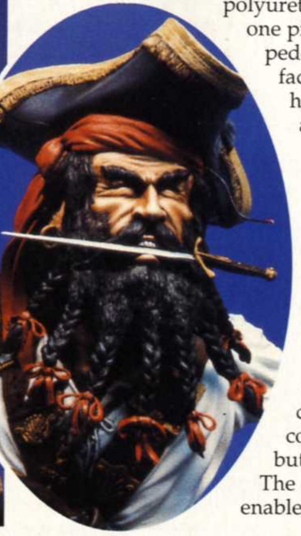
Also new is set SK-36 a set of tracks, with replacement sprockets, for the 1:35 scale US M-113 Armoured Personnel Carrier kits from Tamiya, Academy and AFV Club.

K.M.J.

Armour Distribution, Accurate Armour Ltd., Units 15-16 Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow, Inverclyde, Scotland PA14 5DG.







Fort Duquesne

New kits released by Fort Duquesne Miniatures have been sent for review, both character figures - a 120mm model of Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe, Commanding Officer Queen's Rangers 1777 and a 1:6 scale bust of perhaps the most famous pirate of all - 'Edward Teach' c.1718 - Blackbeard!

Blackbeard, (SP02) sculpted by Nick Dransfield, is a hefty polyurethane resin casting - one piece including his pedestal stand with the face and famous beard, hat, holstered pistol and dagger (to go between his teeth) as separate parts.

Detail is very good and has come out of the mould without any loss of definition - especially the plaited beard with its little ribbon bows. Definitely a painters' model, it couldn't possibly be conceived as anyone but Blackbeard.

The design of the bust enables the face and beard to be painted separately and then attached to the main casting, under the hat. A piece of wire is included to cut the burning slow matches Blackbeard put under his hat brim to impress his victims are required. There have been plenty of models of Blackbeard, the legendary pirate and this is, probably, the best 1:6 scale bust of him so far. Price is £36.95 plus 50p p&p from Historex Agents of Dover.

The 120mm kit of Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe (kit no. 210) was designed by Gary Dombrowski and is the kind of model I personally prefer, straight up and down, good anatomy in an uncomplicated pose, with both feet firmly on the ground. I'm suppose I'm 'old-fashioned', but action figures, for me, are for groups and dioramas where their particular actions can 'tell a story'.

As Officer Commanding the Queen's Rangers, c.1777 Simcoe wears a green coat faced black with silver lace and buttons. Contrast is provided by his white waistcoat and breeches, relieved with an officers' crimson sash. The figure's pose is that of an officer and quite convincing. Price is £29.70 + 50p p&p.

Fort Duquesne Miniatures are stocked by Historex Agents, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ.

K.M.J.

Prices in text

Fort Duquesne Military Miniatures, 105 Tristan Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15209, USA.

M&P Accessories

Weathering Metalizer Powder marketed by M&P Accessories provides an alternative to paint based 'metal finishes' especially for weathering and representing the varying brightnesses of steel or aluminum on worn or moving parts such as tank tracks and sprockets.

The powder is extremely fine, much finer than you could grind down pastels, for example, and I found was easily (and best) applied by brush. It adheres best to matt finishes and the more you 'scrub' with the brush the better it adheres to the painted surface. Any excesses can be blown or gently brushed away, but anything approaching vigorous makes the powder attach itself, which, afterall, is the technique required. However, I would advise a practice session on an old and unwanted model first, just to test the 'depths' of application possible. The more powder you add the brighter the metal becomes and it can be buffed to a greater sheen if required. Also, the colour to which the powder is applied can be influential in the finished result, especially for light applications. Again, some experimentation with different colours will reveal the properties of the powder. Initial tests show the effect produced by the powder to be similar to using the direct application of the graphite in a soft pencil, but taking that process much further in that control is maintained over the density of the finished effect. Give it a try, you won't be disappointed.

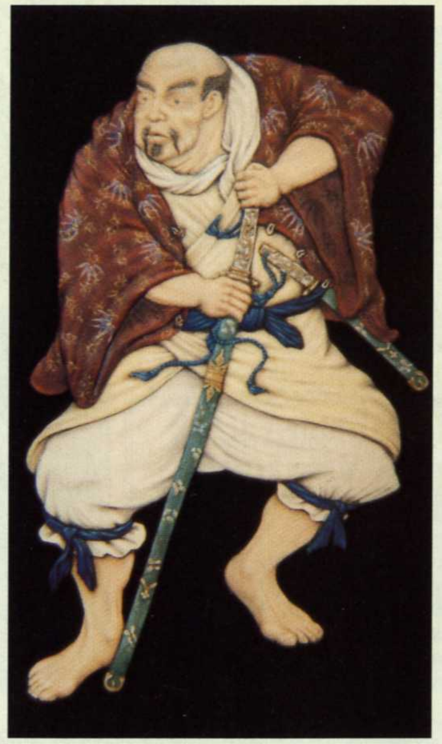
The powder comes in a small jar and costs £2.50 plus 50p p&p in the UK for up to two items. Postage is £1 in Europe and £1.50 the rest of the world. Orders over two items add 50p postage in each case. Sterling cheques only made out to M. Lucraft.

K.M.J.

Price in text

M&P Accessories, 1 Church Lane, Lower Edge, Elland, West Yorkshire HX5 9QB.

Roy Hunt



A new flat figure cast in polyurethane resin from Roy Hunt is a 12th century Samurai Warrior and approximately 120mm high. The pose is very classical and obviously based on the style of ancient Japanese illustrations. Samurai are excellent subjects for the painter allowing a certain amount of freedom in how they are handled.

Casting flats, hand poured in resin into an open RTV rubber mould gives detail to one side only. However, this departure from traditional casting methods with white metal and slate or vulcanised rubber moulds, does produce a flat figure with exquisite detail, and faithfully reproduces the original master design. Intended for mounting in a picture frame there is no base on the figure.

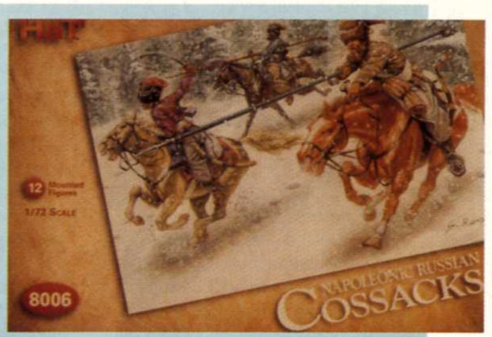
If you're a 'died in the wool' metal flats painter, give this one a try, you'll be pleasantly surprised.

K.M.J.

Price £7.50 (Sterling cheques and postal orders only please to R.A. Hunt)

Roy Hunt, 9 Joyce Page Close, Charlton, London SE7 8TA. Tel/fax: 0181 305 2868.

HäT Industrie



Napoleonic Russian Cossacks (8006) come from a range of HäT Industrie 1:72 scale soft plastic figures sent to us for review by Chiltern World of Miniatures. Intended for wargames use, they can, however, be displayed singly or grouped for vignettes, their exquisite detail showing much potential for figure painters.

Cast in a soft polythene type plastic, they will need some form of sealing undercoat before painting can take place, otherwise paint will not adhere properly and if it finally does, the excess oils in the polythene will find their way out through it. A diluted PVA based glue works quite well as a sealant and makes a transparent 'shell' over the polythene when dry.

Their are four basic poses for the Cossacks and two basic horse designs, repeated on sprues so there are 12 mounted figures to the box for a very reasonable £4.95 plus 10% postage from Chiltern World of Miniatures. There's even spare fur caps if you intend some conversions! Wargamers shouldn't find the poses too unregimented and a sizeable unit can be amassed at 12 to a box for only a reasonable outlay.

Napoleonic period figures, and some others from different periods, in the Hät Industrie range are: French Mamelukes; Prussian Uhlans, Prussian Artillery; French Dragoons; Russian Dragoons; WWI British Infantry; WWI US Infantry; Prussian Dragoons; American Civil War zouaves; Brunswick Avante Garde; French Lancers; WWI German Infantry; WWI French Infantry; WWII Italian Infantry.

Full details of the range of Hät Industrie figures are available from Chiltern World of Miniatures, 1 Elmbourne Road, London SW17 8JS. Tel: 0181 673 9069. Fax: 0181 772 9666. email: chiltern.miniatures@btinternet.com

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Hät Industrie Inc., PO Box 50284, Bellevue, WA 98015-0284, USA.

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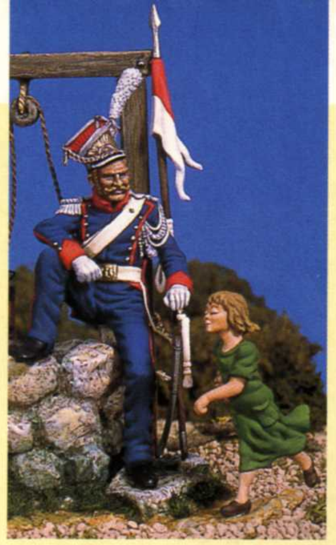
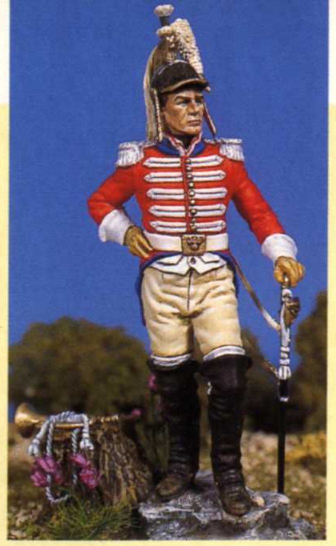
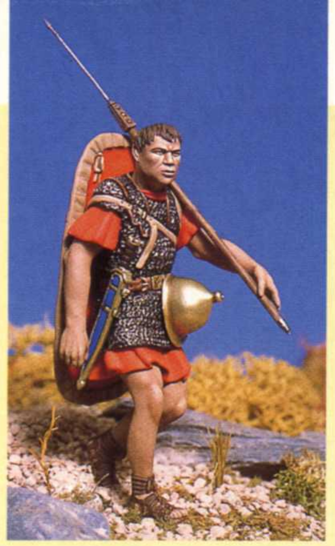
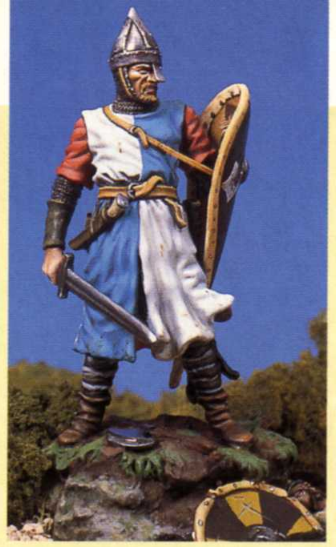








Andrea Miniatures

New 54mm white metal kits from Spanish manufacturer Andrea Miniatures are additions to their Napoleonic Wars, General and Medieval Knights ranges, plus an 80mm in the 'Girls' series - a fairy called 'Tinkle Bell' (G-021 £26.50 + 50p p&p). Quite an interesting fantasy figure this one and cleverly designed with a key the fairy is attempting to pick up acting as a support to keep her body aloft.

A Polish Lancer sat on a well watching a cheeky faced little girl with a basket on her arm skip by on some errand makes a charming vignette (S7-F16 £17 + 50p p&p). The kit is cast entirely in white metal, and the well base, walls and wooden frame with bucket is provided. A pulley on the frame for the bucket rope is in the kit, but you'll have to supply your own rope! The wall of the well is supplied in two halves and will require plenty of filler, but you can easily slap it onto the representation of very rough stonework without making too much of a mess, and thence to the base, which is a little on the small side, so I'd recommend making your own groundwork to take the well. Otherwise, fit of parts is quite good and care must be taken to get the lancer's backside correctly positioned on the well.

Continuing in the Napoleonic theme, S7-F17 is a Trumpeter of 1st Cuirassiers (1809-1812), price £11.35 + 50p p&p. The pose is conventional and a generous cast scenic base is provided with a tree stump cast in as a place to lay the trumpet. The cord for the trumpet is a very fine, flexible casting which can be draped over the tree stump. The rest is straightforward with a wipe of filler at joins, but nothing drastic. The cuirassier's red jacket with white lace (in a sea of French Blue) is very attractive.

A marching Roman Soldier (SG-F29 £11.35 + 50p p&p) of 1st century BC is dressed in a mail shirt, Montefortino type helmet and rounded shield. The marching pose is good and the figure well designed in how the left leg attaches to the body for a positive location on the body. The pilum point is such a fine, thin casting it had bent (like the original!) and broken in the kit, but it can be glued back. Such fine castings need stiff card backing in transit as the foam liner in the packaging tends to bend or break them.

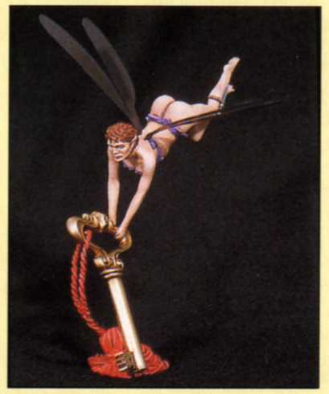
A Norman Knight (SM-F178 £11.05 + 50p p&p) in a defiant pose is the latest addition to the Medieval Knights range. The Norman is c.1066 and the kit has a cast scenic base supplied to resemble a river bank with, in the water, a 'fallen' Saxon whose head, chest, hand and shield are just above water, his broken battleaxe on the bank. There's certainly plenty to paint on this miniature.

Historex, Wellington House, 157 Snargate Street, Dover, Kent CT17 9BZ stock the Andrea range of figures and accessories.

K.M.J.

Prices in text

Andrea Miniatures, Soldier Express, S.L., C/Los Talleres, 21- Pol. Ind. de Alperdrete, 28430 Alpedrete, Madrid, Spain.



S Model

Perhaps more known for their military vehicle kits, Polish manufacturer S Model also make some good 1:16 scale miniature figures.

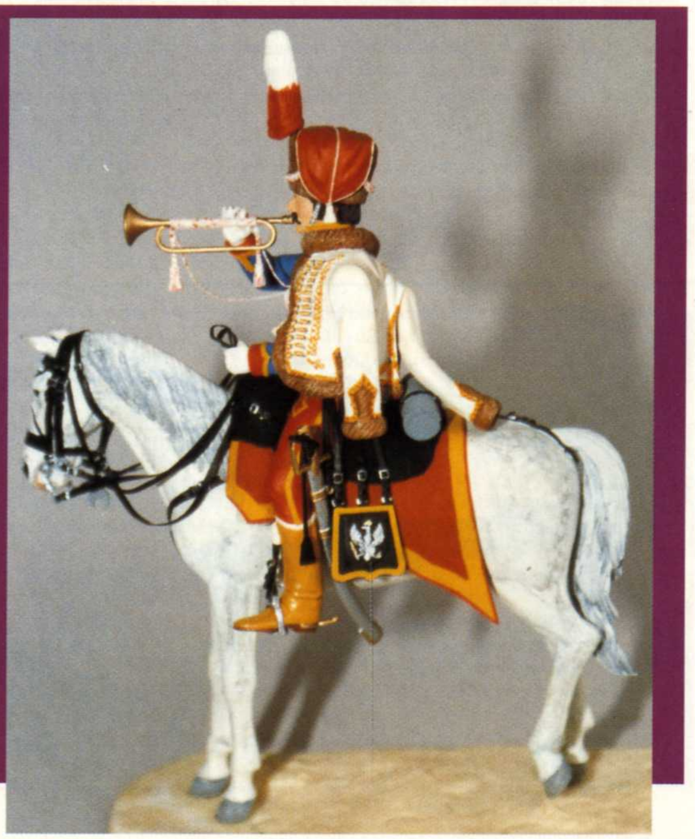
Via Pol Models we received a Polish Hussar Trumpeter 10th Regiment in Full Dress, 1809-14 is a kit cast in polyurethane resin, and they have made quite a good job of it too! The kit design and subsequent casting shows how good S Model are at producing in polyurethane resin. The horse is a single piece casting, solid, with some of the tack, bridle, breast plate, girth and crupper in place. By following the mould part lines I worked out how they made the mould and decided it wasn't one they would get many castings from. However, what you do get is very good. The reins, etc., need to be added, but buckles and ornaments are provided on a resin skim, along with parts for the trumpeter's uniform. However, one or bits have to be fashioned by the modeller. There isn't an instruction sheet inside the kit box to use as a reference for the horse's tack or painting instructions. The colour illustration on the box has to be a starting point, but it doesn't show everything.

I was impressed with the shabrack, cast as one piece and it literally just slips onto the horse, it sort of 'clips' into position. The fit of the rider in the saddle is exemplary and no adjustment is needed to get a better seat by filling, etc. Quite a colourful uniform too. Blue jacket, red breeches and a white pelisse. By tradition, in most armies, trumpeters rode grey horses, perhaps so they were instantly recognisable. I think I'd go for a darker grey here, however, considering the white pelisse on the figure. The darker colour should provide more contrast . The conversion potential offered by this figure is very good and resin isn't too bad to work on. It's very good value for money too!

K.M.J.

Price £25

Pol Models, 64 Cumberland Road, Acton, London W3 6EY.



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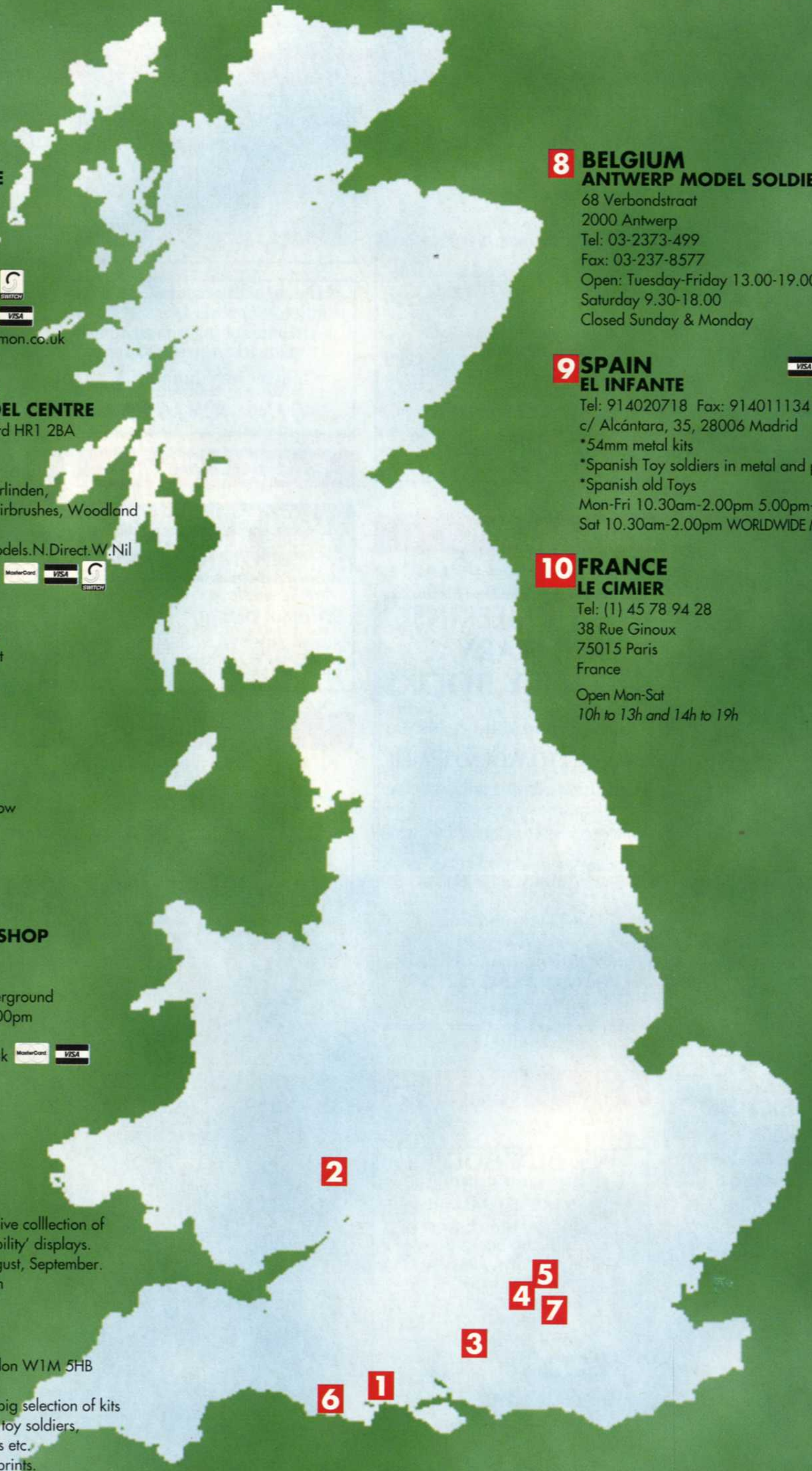

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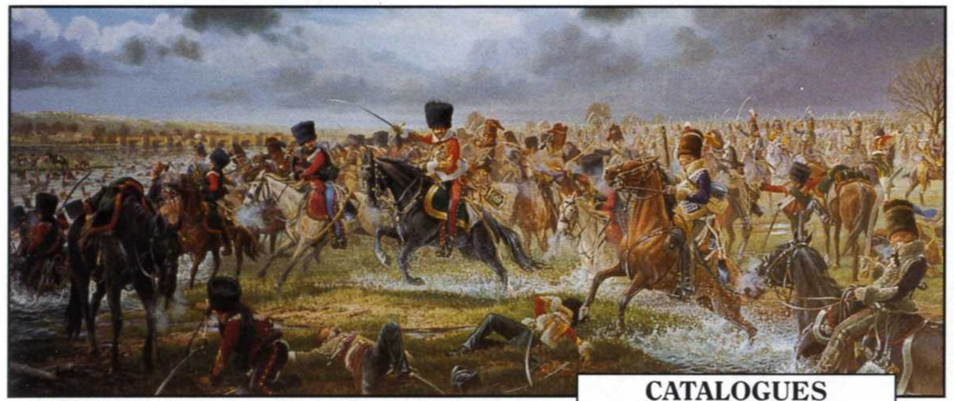

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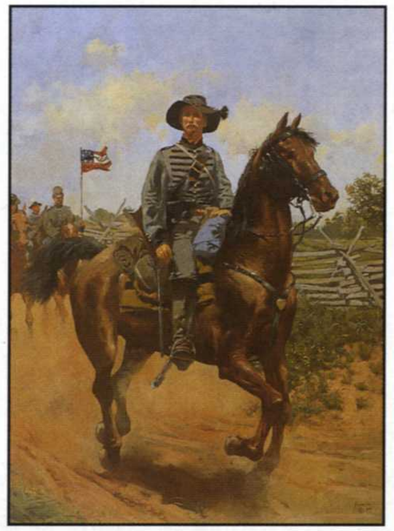

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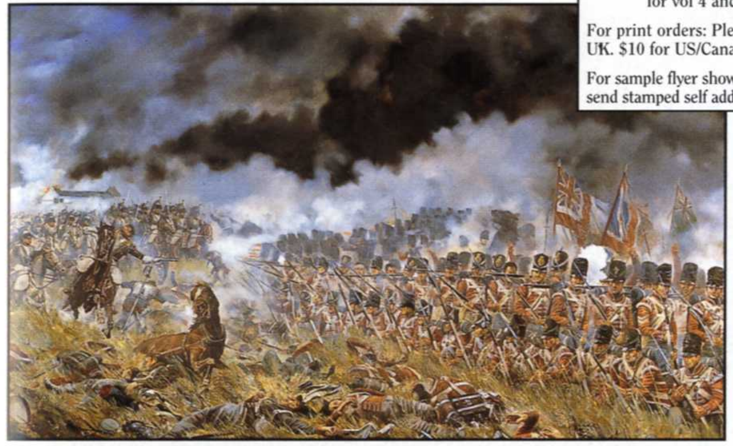

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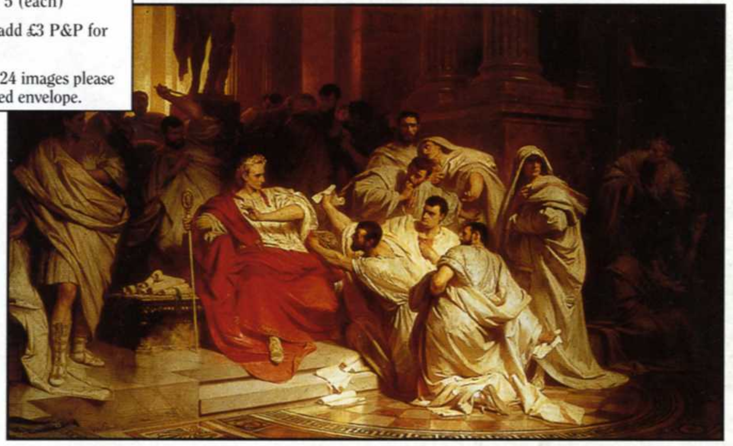

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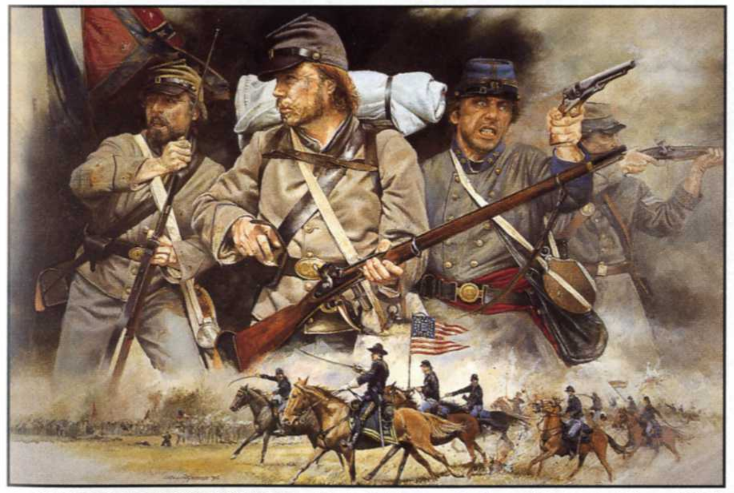

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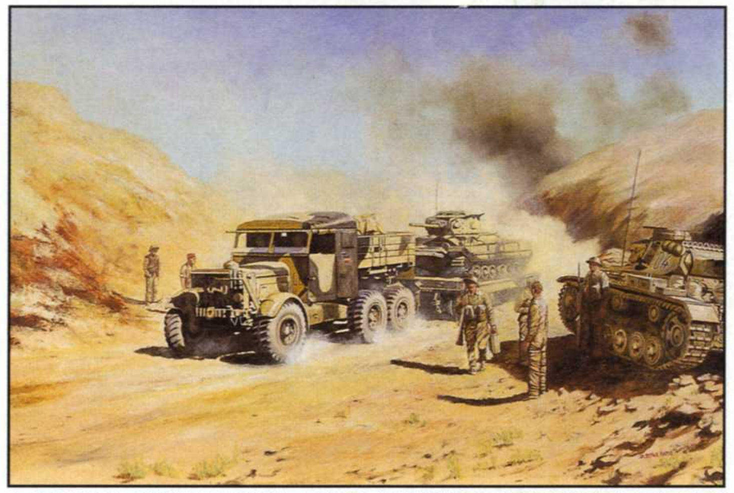

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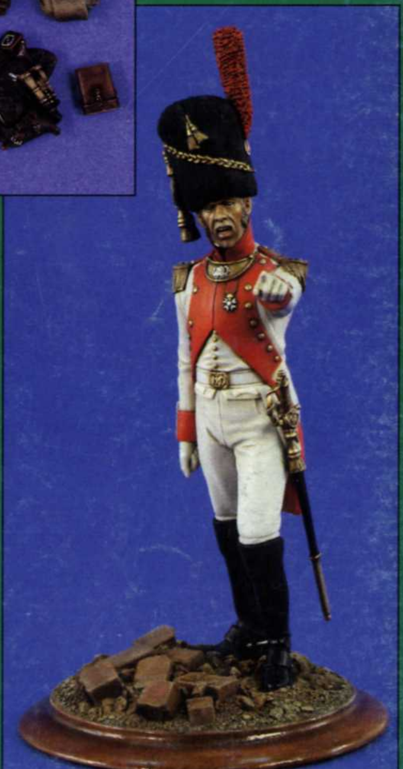

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